Performing Salatul-Istikharah (istikhara)

(All images contained in this document are designed in a manner that is not intended to recreate the creation of Allah!)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

With regard to performing a sincere prayer of istikhara to Allah, it is important to note that istikhara means to seek goodness from Allah; thus, when one intends to perform an important task, it is strongly encouraged that they perform a sincere prayer of istikhara. In essence, the Muslim who performs a sincere prayer of istikhara is actually requesting Allah Almighty, the Knower of the unseen to guide them in the endeavor if it will benefit them in this life and the next and to protect them from it if it will not.

The evidence for performing a sincere prayer of istikhara prior to engaging in a task is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Jabir ibn 'Abd-Allah al-Salami reportedly said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) used to teach his companions to make**

istikhaarah in all things, just as he used to teach them Surahs of the Quran. He said: 'If any one of you is concerned about a decision he has to make, then let him pray two rakahs of non-obligatory prayer, then say: Allaahumma inni astakheeruka bi 'ilmika wa astaqdiruka bi qudratika wa as'aluka min fadlika, fa innaka taqdiru wa laa aqdir, wa ta'lamu wa laa a'lam, wa anta 'allaam al-ghuyoob. Allaahumma fa in kunta ta'lamu haadha'l-amra (then the matter should be specifically mentioned) khayran li fi 'aajil amri wa aajilihi (or: fi deeni wa ma'aashi wa 'aaqibati amri) faqdurhu li wa yassirhu li thumma baarik li fihi. Allaahumma wa in kunta ta'lamu annahu sharrun li fi deeni wa ma'aashi wa 'aaqibati amri (or: fi 'aajili amri wa aajilihi) fasrifni 'anhu [wasrafhu 'anni] waqdur li al-khayr haythu kaana thumma radini bihi (O Allaah, I seek Your guidance [in making a choice] by virtue of Your knowledge, and I seek ability by virtue of Your power, and I ask You of Your great bounty. You have power, I have none. And You know, I know not. You are the Knower of hidden things. O Allah, if in Your knowledge, this matter (then it should be mentioned by name) is good for me both in this world and in the Hereafter (or: in my religion, my livelihood and my affairs), then ordain it for me, make it easy for me, and bless it for me. And if in Your knowledge it is bad for me and for my religion, my livelihood and my affairs (or: for me both in this world and the next), then turn me away from

it, [and turn it away from me], and ordain for me the good wherever it may be and make me pleased with it.'"

Lastly, it is important to note that after one has performed a sincere prayer of istikhara, it is not necessary to repeat the prayer if it was in fact performed sincerely. One has to trust in Allah! If one does not obtain what they desired after performing a sincere prayer of istikhara they should be content; because, Allah has chosen to protect them from it.

The prerequisites which must be met before one can perform the istikhara prayer:

The manner in which a sincere prayer of istikhara is performed is similar to that of any two rakah sunnah prayer, as with the two rakahs performed before Fajr salat; however, after performing the tashahhud and before saying the taslim, one should at that time sincerely perform the istikhara by asking Allah to guide them in the endeavor if it will benefit them in this life and the next and to protect them from it if it will not.

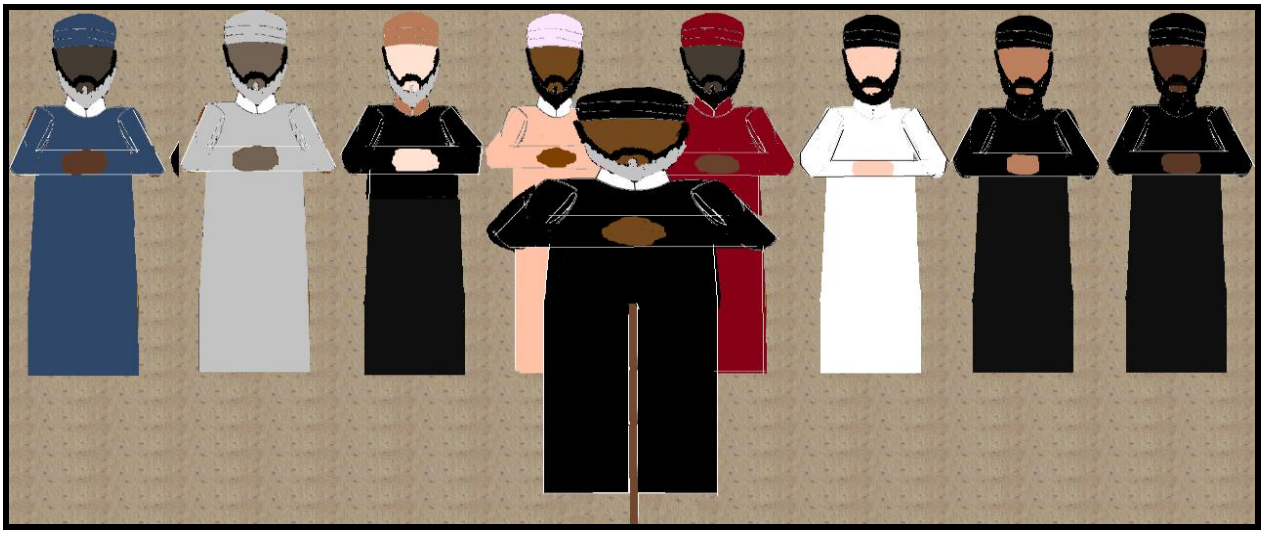
Make the Niyyah (intention) to make salat: The proof for this practice is the hadith of Imam Muslim, wherein the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said, "**Verily the actions are by intention and there is for everyone only what he intended...**"

Sutra: The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Ahmad wherein Abu Hurairah related that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "**When one of you prays, he should place something in front of him...**" Also, a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud narrated by Abū Sa'īd Al-Khudrī reports: "**Allāh's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) said, 'When you do your Salāt, do it towards a Sutrah and come close to it. And never let any one pass between you and your Sutra, even if you have to fight him for the Devil is with him.**'" What is more, whenever possible, the object that one uses as a sutra should be at least equal to the size of a camel's saddle (about 12 inches high - give or take a few inches):

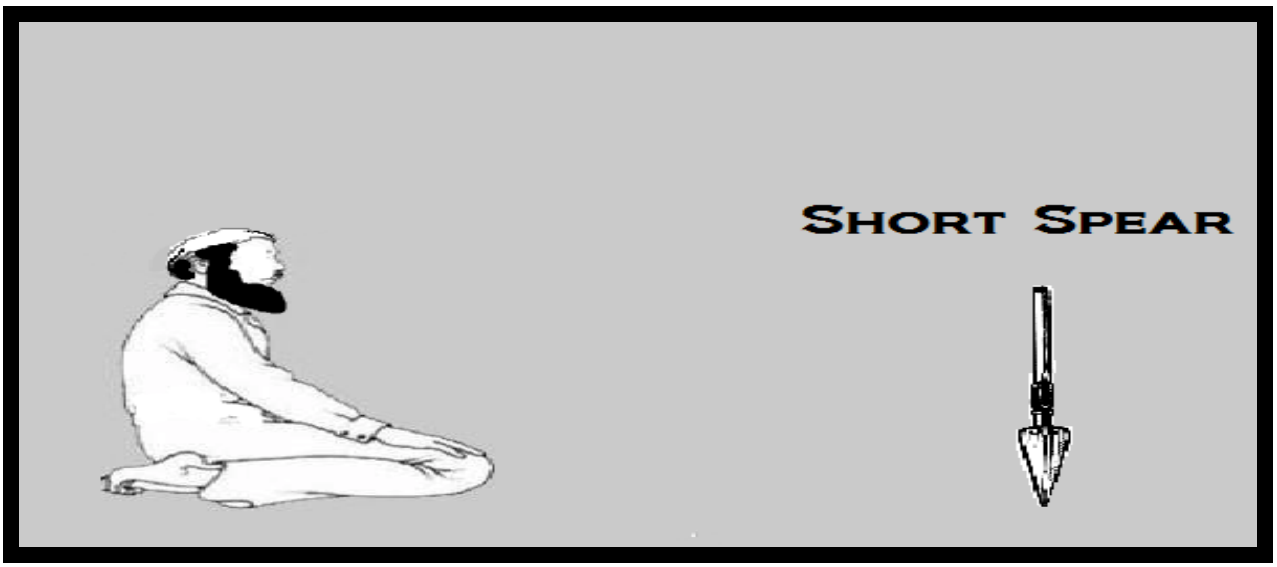
The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim wherein Musa b. Talha reported on the authority of

his father: "**We used to say prayer and the animals moved in front of us. We mentioned it to the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) and he said: 'If anything equal to the back of a saddle is in front of you, then what walks in front, no harm would come to him. Ibn Numair said: No harm would come whosoever walks in front.'**"

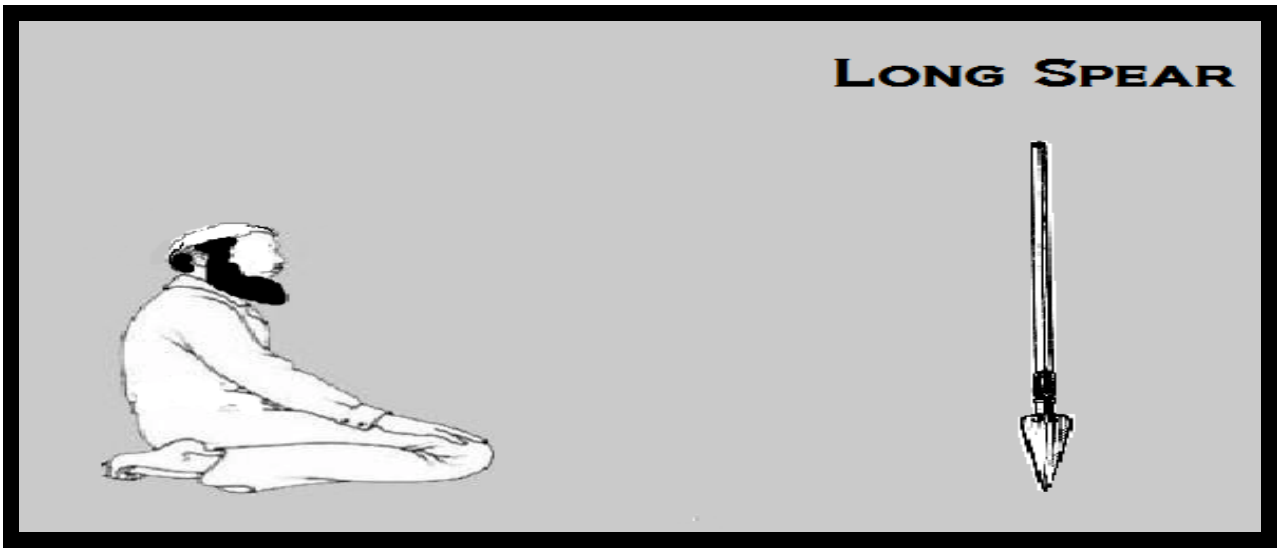
The Imam, the Imam's sutra, or the row of Muslims performing congregational salat in front of an individual is also sufficient as a sutra. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim wherein Ibn Umar reported: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) went out on the 'Id day, he ordered to carry a spear-and it was fixed in front of him (sutra for the Imam), and he said prayer towards its (direction), and the people were behind him (he served as their sutra). And he did it in the journey, and that is the reason why the Amirs carried it.**"



A spear (short or long) is sufficient for a sutra:

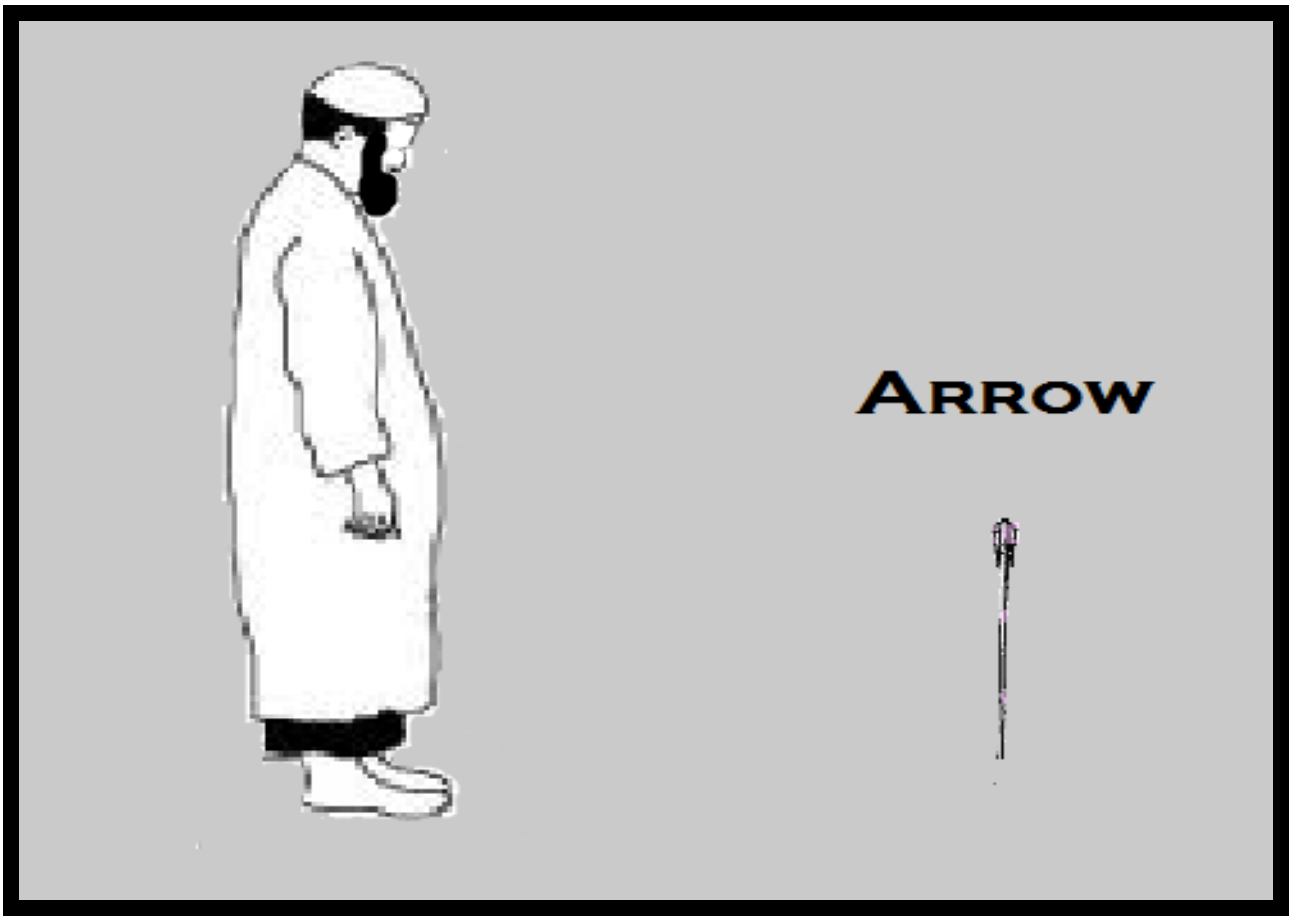


The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from 'Awn ibn Abi Juhayfa who reportedly said: **"I heard my father say, 'The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) came out to us at midday and was brought wudu' water and did wudu'. Then he led us in the Dhuhr and 'Asr prayers with a short spear in set up front of him. Women and donkeys were passing behind it.'"**



The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein It is related from 'Abdullah: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to have a spear set up for him and would pray facing it**."

The use of an arrow as a sutra:



The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Ahmad wherein It is related from Sabrah ibn Mu'abid who reported: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: 'When one of you prays, he should make a partition for his salah, even if it is an arrow**.'"

The use of a bed as a sutra:

The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from Aiesha: "**...The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) would come and pray facing the middle of the bed...**."

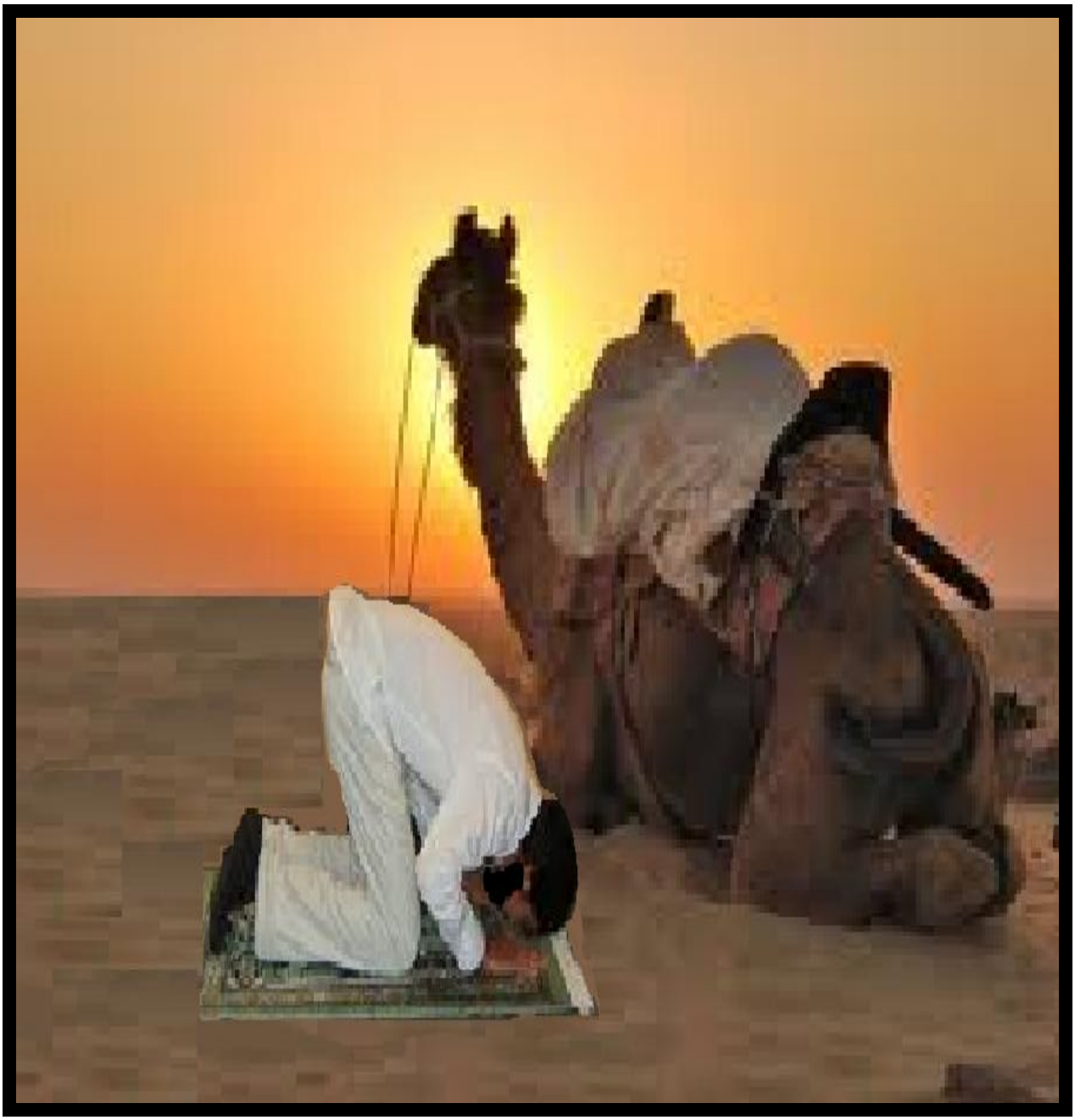
The use of a pillar as a sutra:

The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from 'Umar who said: **"Those who are praying are more entitled to the pillars than those conversing." 'Umar saw a man praying between two pillars and moved him up to a pillar and said, "Pray towards it."**

Furthermore, it is related in another hadith collected by Bukhari that Yazid ibn 'Ubayd said: **"I used to come with Salama ibn al-Akwa' and he would pray behind the pillar where the Qur'an was kept. I said, 'Abu Muslim, I see that you are keen to pray by this pillar.' He said, 'I saw that the Prophet(P.B.U.H.) was keen to pray there.'"**

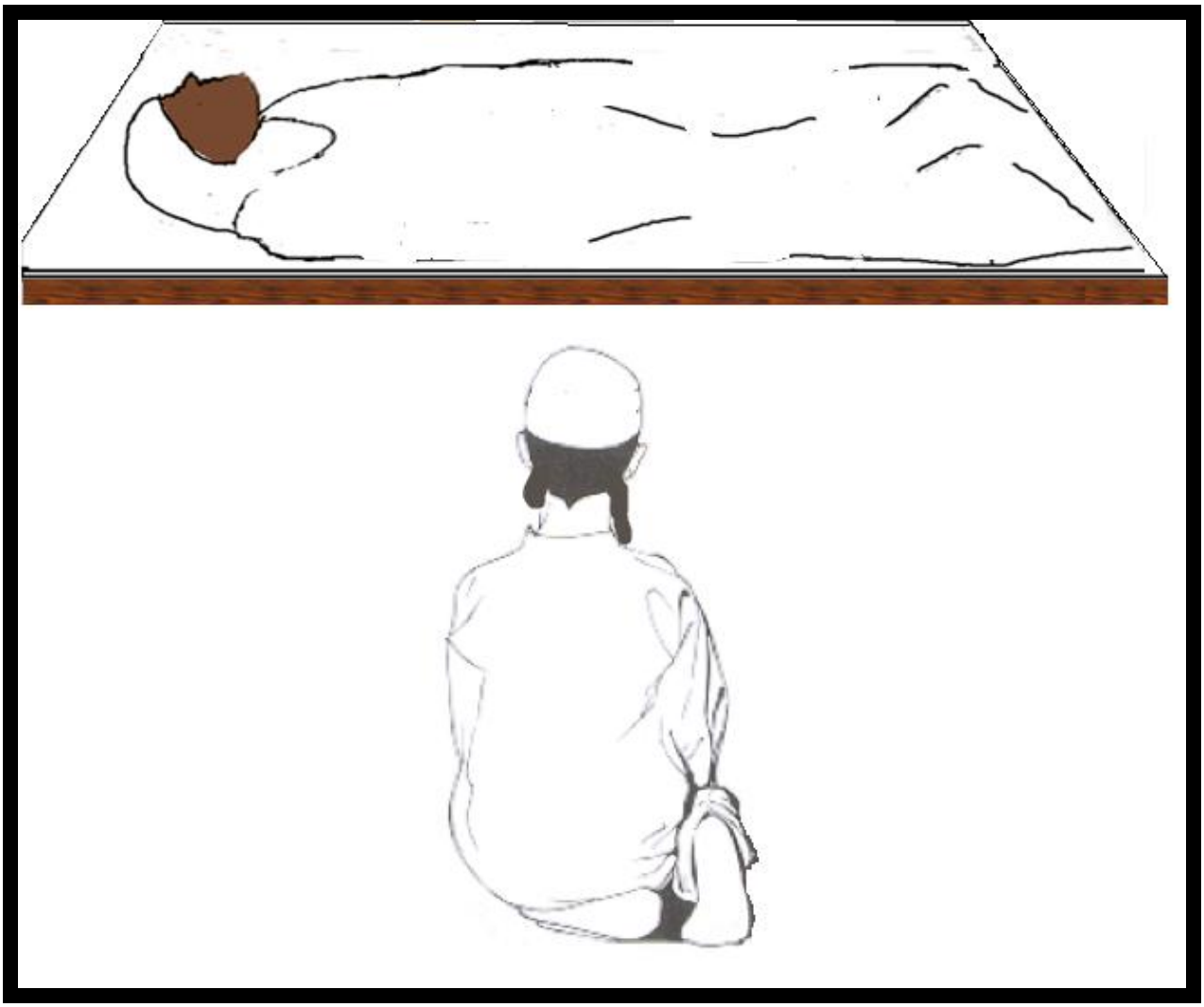
The use of a camel as a sutra:

The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from Nafi: "**I saw Ibn 'Umar praying while taking his camel as a Sutra in front of him and he said, 'I saw the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) doing the same.'**"



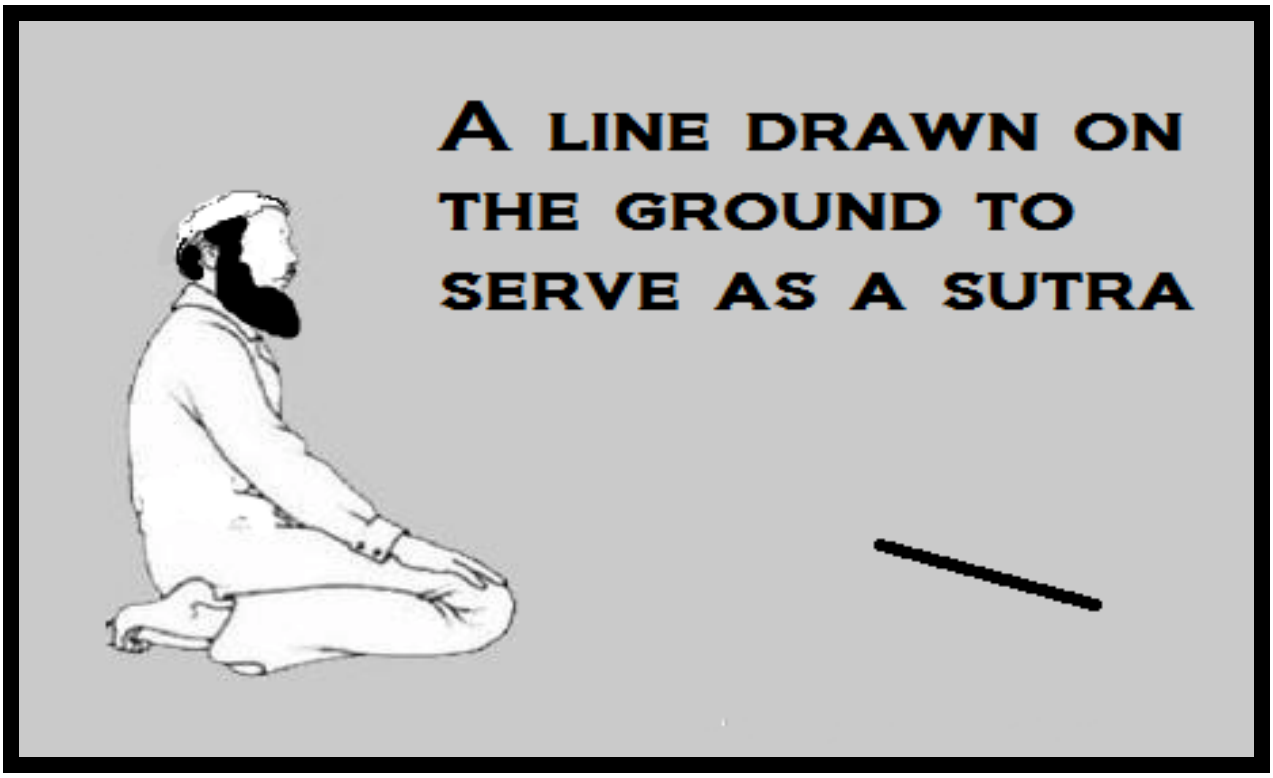
The use of a bed as a sutra with someone asleep atop of it (even if they are menstruating):

The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from 'A'isha who reportedly said: **"Do you equate us with dogs and donkeys? I once found myself lying on the bed when the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) came and faced the middle of the bed and started praying. I disliked being in front of him, so I eased myself down towards the foot of the bed until I had slipped out from under my bedcover."**



Furthermore, in a hadith collected by Bukhari it is related that Maymuna reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to pray with me sleeping beside him. When he prostrated, his garment touched me and I was menstruating**."

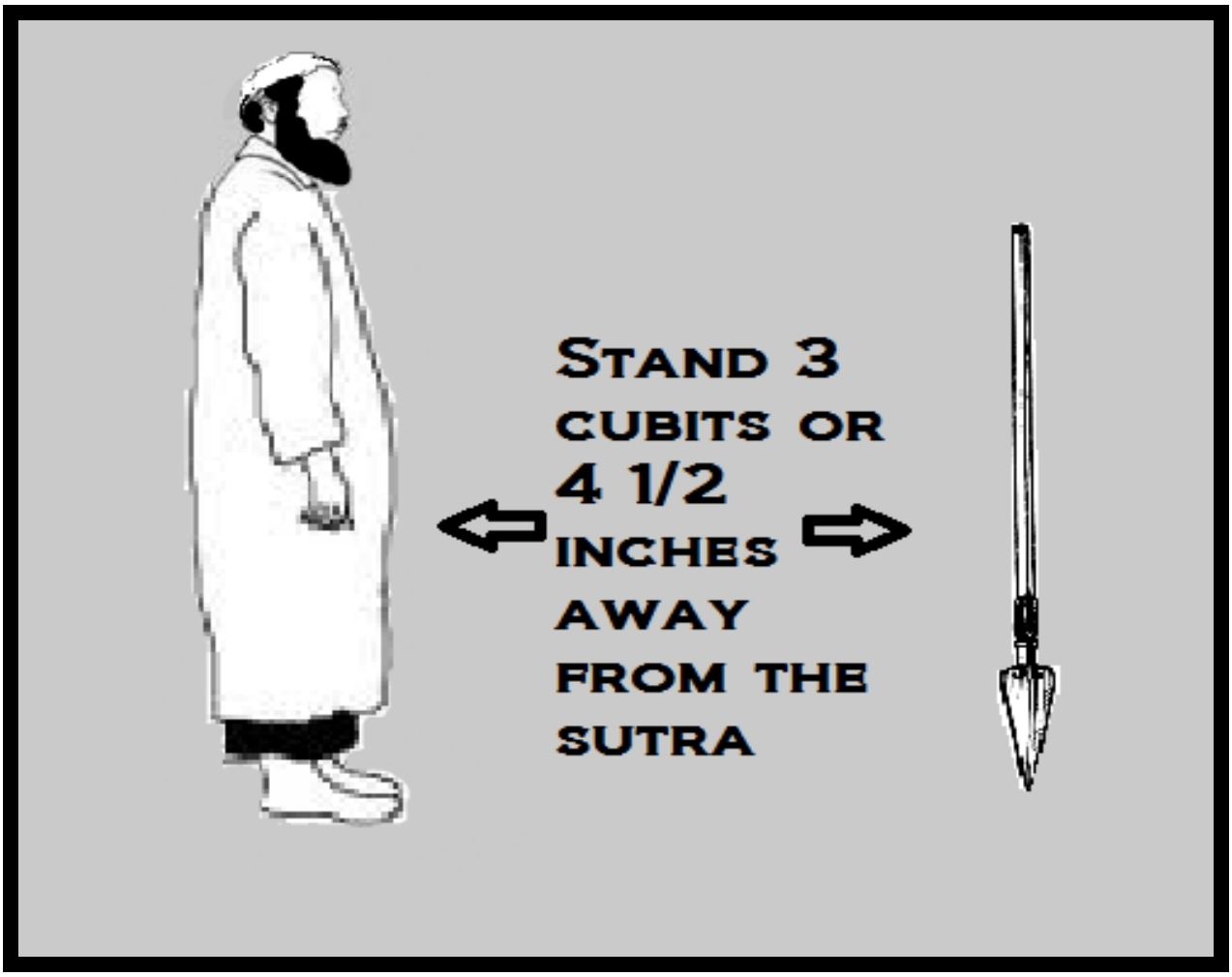
The use of a line on the ground as a sutra:



The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Hurairah related that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "**When one of you prays, he should place something in front of him. If he cannot find anything, he should prop up his staff (in front of him). If he does not have a staff, he should draw a line (on the ground in front of him), then nothing that passes in front of him will harm him**."

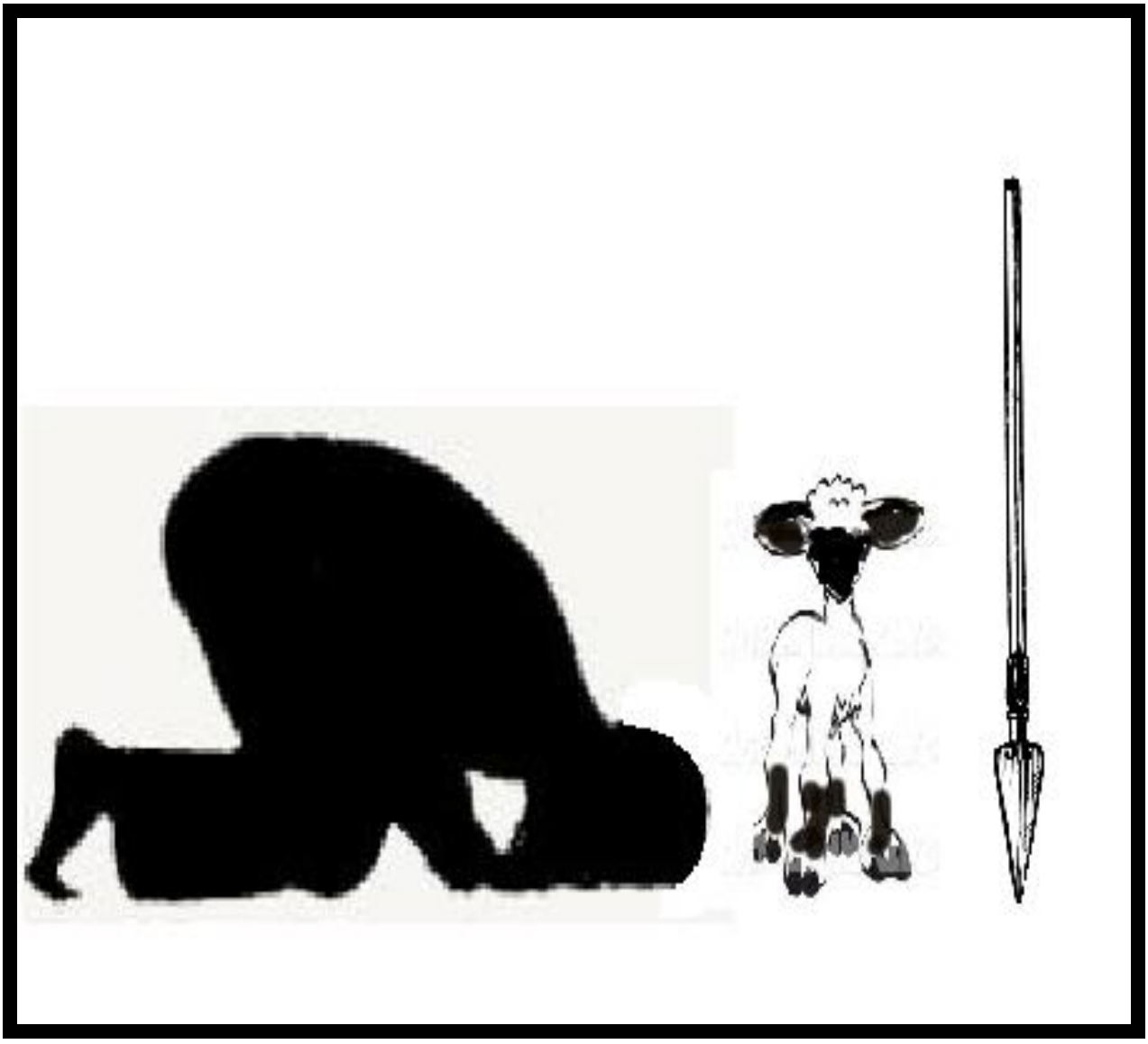
The preferred distance between the person intending to perform salat and their sutra:

The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from Nafi': "**Whenever 'Abdullah entered the Kaaba, he would walk straight ahead with the door directly behind him. He walked on until there was about three cubits (54 inches or 4 1/2 feet) between him and the wall in front of him where he prayed, seeking the place where Bilal told him that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) had prayed. He said, 'There is no harm in anyone praying in any part of the House he likes.'**"

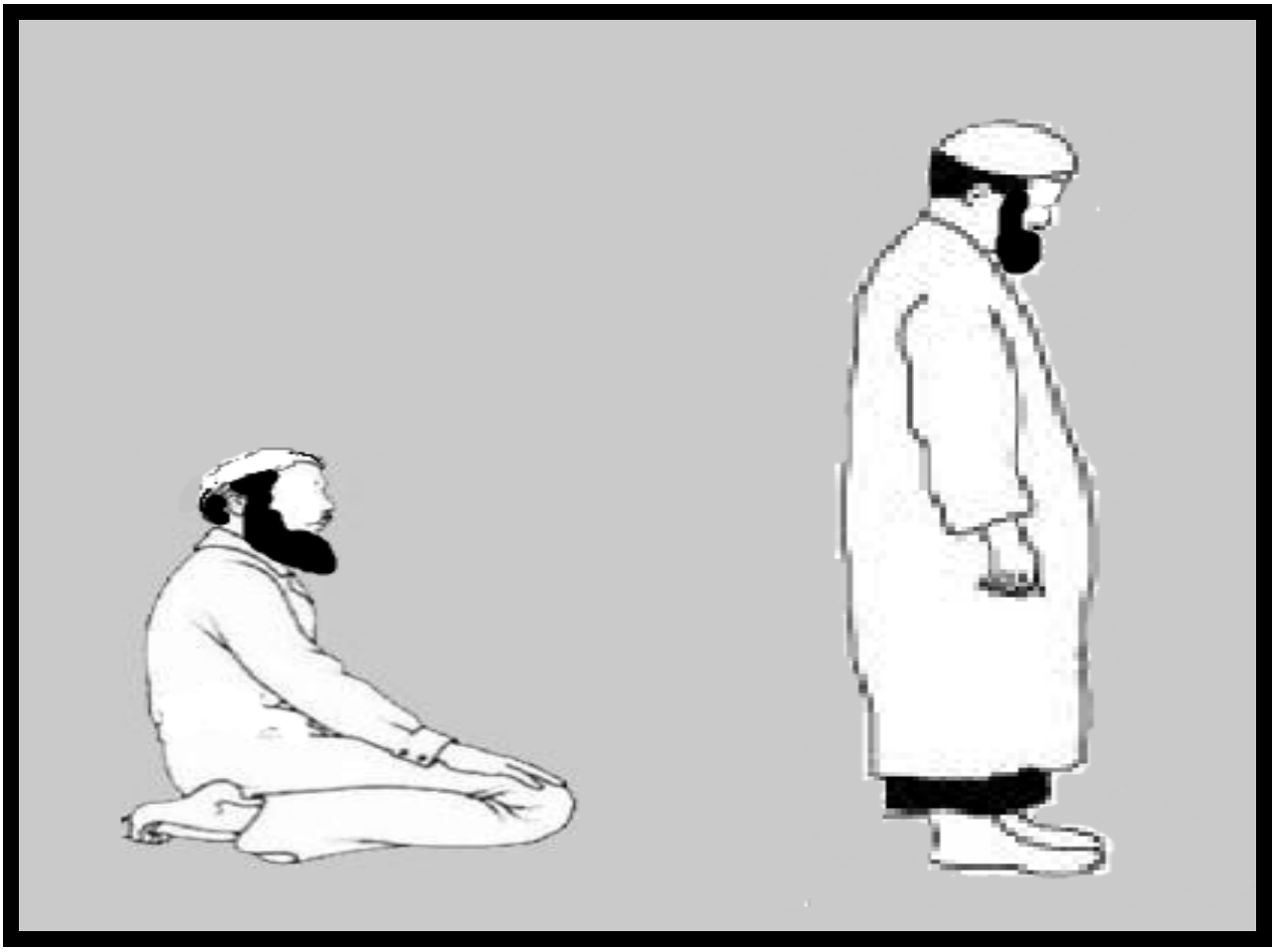


The distance the sutra should be from the place of prostration (where the forehead of the person performing salat comes into contact with the ground surface):

It is related in a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Sahl reportedly said: "**Between the place where the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) prayed and the wall (sutra), there was room for a sheep to walk past** (about 18 - 24 inches)."

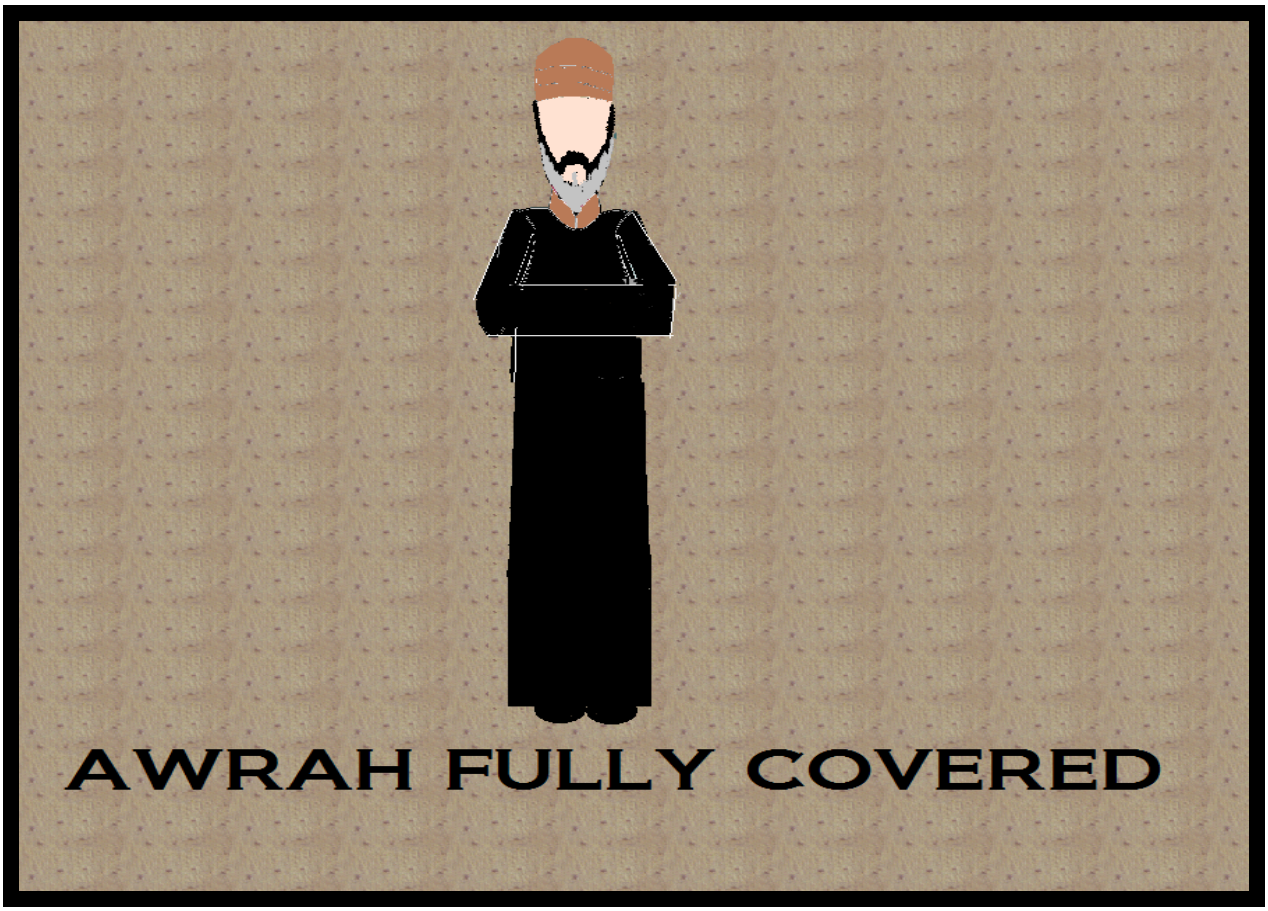


The adequate distance one should stand away from another's sutra in a Masjid, and the etiquette of one intending to make sunnah (voluntary/supererogatory) salat to find a location wherein others will not violate their sutra by walking in front of them:



The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein 'Uthman reportedly said: **"I disliked facing another man when he was praying if that distracted him. However, if he is not distracted by it, Zayd ibn Thabit said, 'It does not matter. The man does not invalidate the other man's prayer.'"**

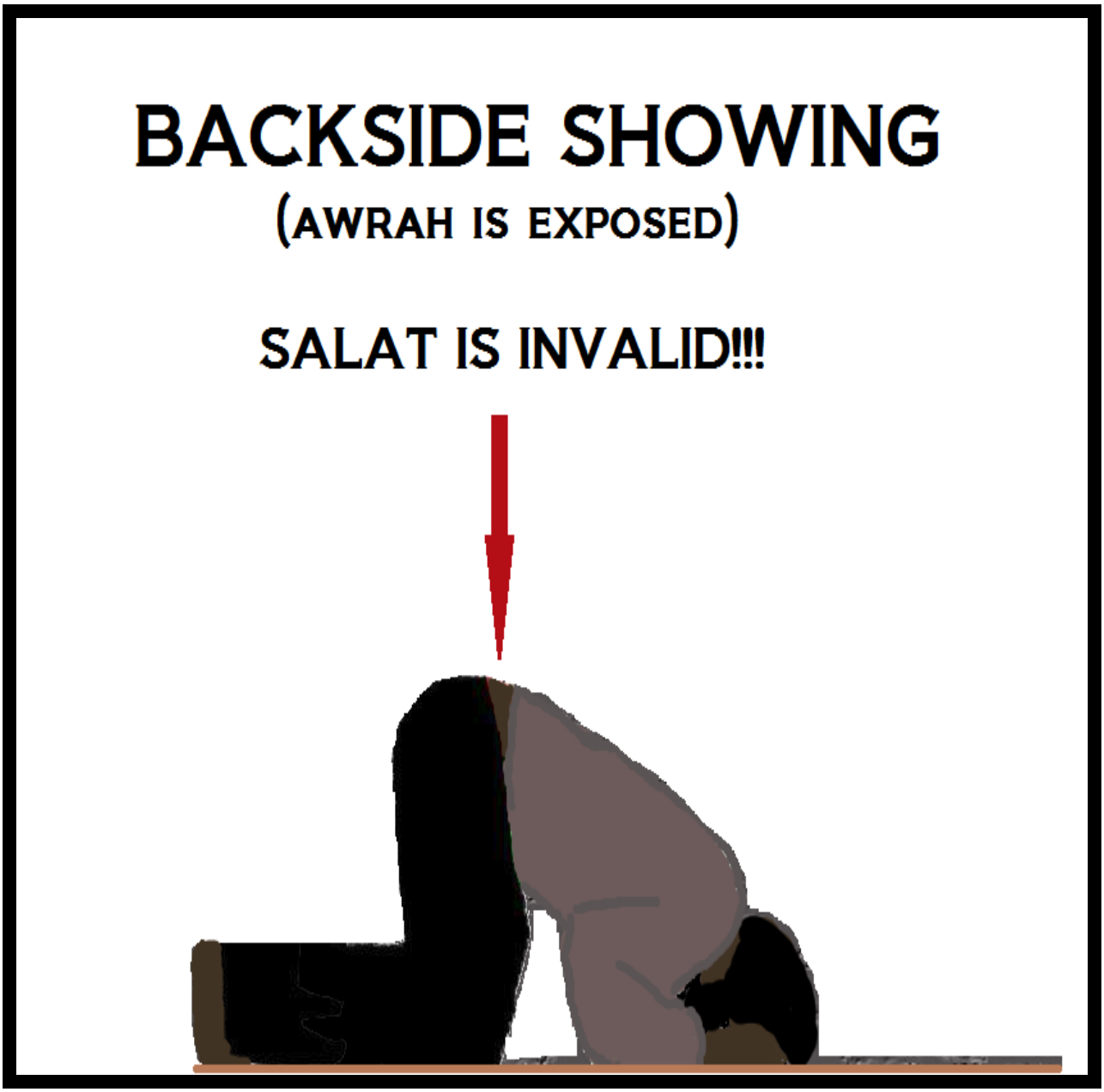
Awrah: It is a prerequisite of salat for a Muslim to cover their awrah; which includes the area between the navel and the knees for a man and the entire body, except the face and hands for a woman.



The evidence for this ruling is found in Surah Al-Araf (7:31) of the Quran which reads: " **O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer...**" Furthermore, a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim that was narrated by Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri declares: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'No man should look at the awrah of another man and no**

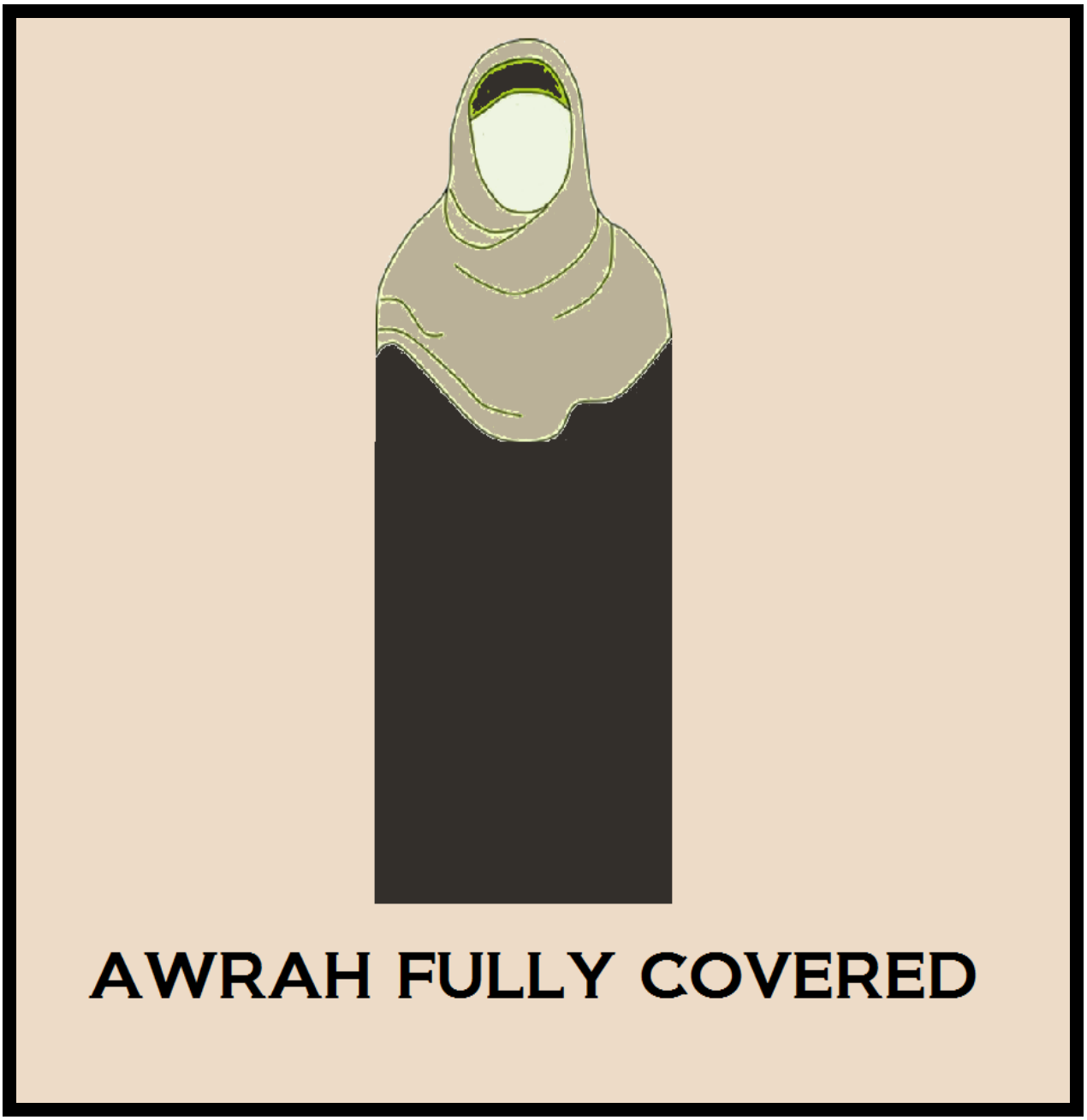
woman should look at the awrah of another woman. No man should be with another man under one cover and no woman should be with another woman under one cover.'" Thus, indicating that the garment being worn must cover the entire awrah.

Regarding what constitutes the awrah of a man, a hadith of Ahmad reports: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said, 'What is between navel and knee is Awrah.**'" Thus indicating that the male garment must at least cover the area between the navel and knees. This fact is further supported by a hadith of Bukhari wherein Said bin Al Harith narrated: "**I asked Jabir bin 'Abdullah about praying in a single garment. He said, 'I traveled with the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) during some of his journeys, and I came to him at night for some purpose and I found him praying. At that time, I was wearing a single garment with which I covered my shoulders and prayed by his side. When he finished the prayer, he asked, 'O Jabir! What has brought you here?' I told him what I wanted. When I finished, he asked, 'O Jabir! What is this garment which I have seen and with which you covered your shoulders?' I replied, 'It is a (tight) garment.' He said, 'If the garment is large enough, wrap it round the body (covering the shoulders) and if it is tight (too short) then use it as an Izar (to be tied around one's waist, which hangs down below the knees).**'"



Regarding the awrah of a woman, the Quran in Suran Al-Ahzab (33:59) reads **"O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is Oft-**

Forgiving, Most Merciful." More explicit details are also found in a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud wherein Aisha, declared: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Allah does not accept the prayer of a woman who has reached puberty unless she wears a khimar (headscarf covering the hair, ears neck and bosom)**."



Furthermore, another hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated by Aisha serves as evidence that only the face and hands are permitted to be exposed. The hadith in question maintains: "**Asma, daughter of AbuBakr, entered upon the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H.) wearing thin clothes. The Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H.) turned his attention from her. He said: 'O Asma, when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, it is not fitting that any part of her should be seen except this,' and he pointed to her face and hands**.'"

Thus, it becomes clear that the awrah of a woman consists of everything except her face and hands. It is also important to note that the garments covering the awrah must not be form-fitting or transparent. These points are verified by the following hadith: Abu Hurayrah reported in a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "**There are two types of people of Hell that I have never seen; people with whips like the tails of cattle, with which they strike the people, and women who are dressed but appear naked, walking with an enticing gait, with their heads looking like the humps of camels, leaning to one side. They will never enter Paradise, nor even smell its fragrance, although its fragrance can be discerned from such and such a distance**."

The method of performing a sincere prayer of istikhara regarding an important endeavor:

STEP 1: Takbir Tahrima (Takbiratul Ihram)

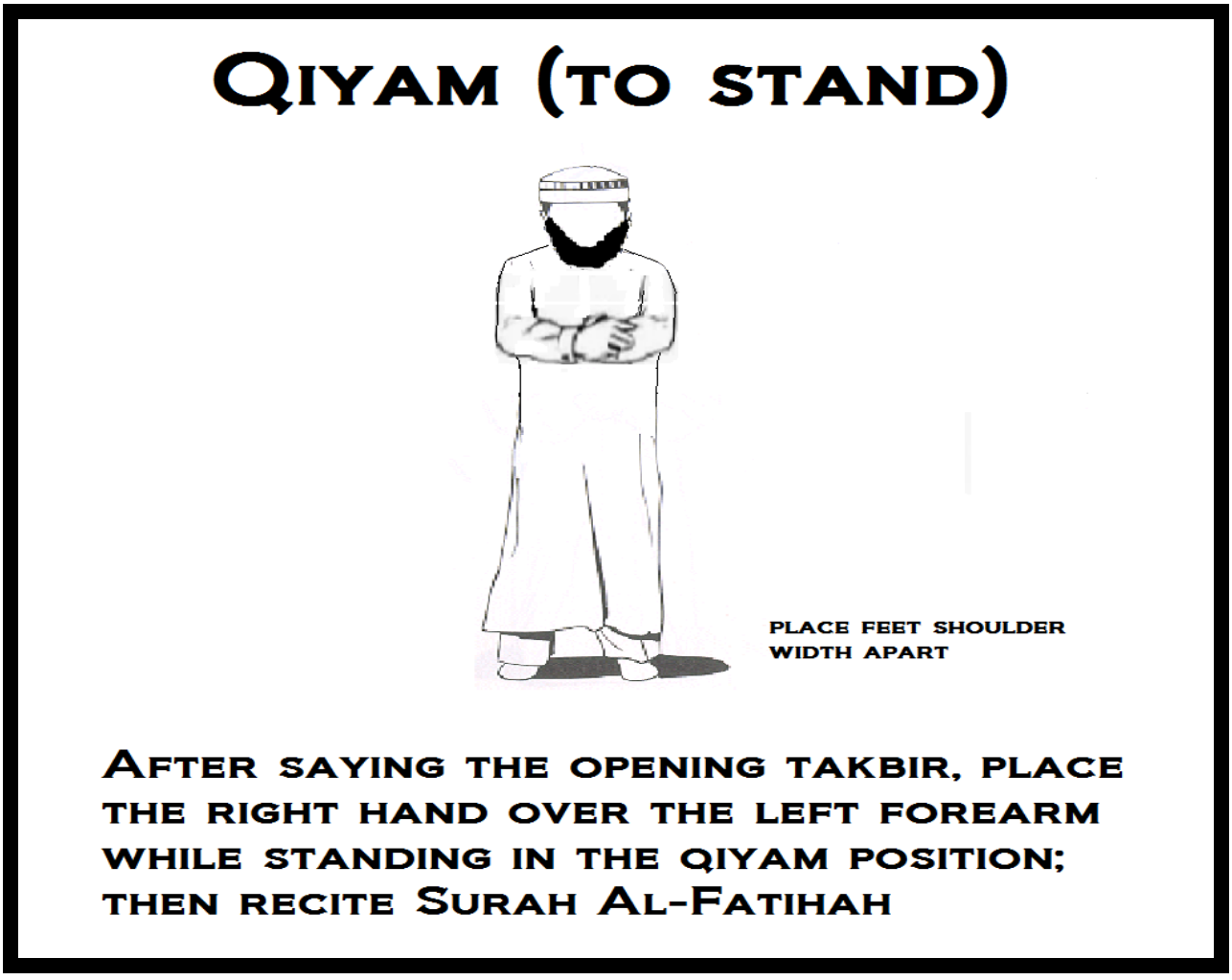
BEGIN BY RAISING THE HANDS UP TO THE SHOULDERS AND SAY "ALLAHU AKBAR" IN THE OPENING TAKBIR OF THE ISTIKHARA PRAYER

اللهُ أَكْبَرُ

The hands of one performing salatul-istikhara are to be raised to the shoulders with the first takbir. (In some instances the fingers appear as if they are near to the height

of the ears) The proof for this practice is the hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Muhammad bin Amr bin Ata narrated: **"I was sitting with some of the companions of the Messenger of Allah's (P.B.U.H.) and we were discussing the way in which the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) made salat. Abu Humaid As-Saidi said, 'I remember the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) better than any one of you.... I saw him raising both his hands up to the level of the shoulders on saying the Takbir...'"**

STEP 2: Qiyam (to stand)


QIYAM (TO STAND)
PLACE FEET SHOULDER WIDTH APART
AFTER SAYING THE OPENING TAKBIR, PLACE THE RIGHT HAND OVER THE LEFT FOREARM WHILE STANDING IN THE QIYAM POSITION; THEN RECITE SURAH AL-FATIHAH

Immediately after reciting the first takbir, a Muslim performing salatul-istikhara should engage in the qiyam position by folding their arms with the palm of the right hand being placed over the left forearm, in an area ranging from either directly on the chest or slightly below the navel. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Sahl bin Sa'd narrated: "**The people were ordered to place the right hand on the left forearm in the prayer. Abu Hazim said, 'I knew that the order was from the Prophet.**'" Furthermore, in a hadith collected by Abu Dawud, Tawus reportedly said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) used to place his right hand on his left hand, then he folded them strictly on his chest in prayer**." However, another narration in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated by Abu Hurayrah reports: "**(The established way of folding the hands is) to hold the hands by the hands (right holding left) in prayer below the navel**." Therefore, in order to avoid engaging into petty bickering over which method is ideal, one can merely comply with the directive in Surah Al-Fatihah of the Quran and follow the siratul mustaqim (the straight path; i.e., the middle course), by placing the right hand over the left forearm which will basically force one's hands to be positioned in an area below the chest and above the navel.

It is also important to note that in a hadith collected by Abu Dawud, Abu Hurairah reportedly said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) prohibited putting one's hands on the hips during the salah**." With this being said, it is important to note that the late Imam Malik (RA) who was documented as having prayed with his hands down by his hips, did so as a result of injuries which prevented him from folding his arms during the salat.

After entering the qiyam position, it is recommended that the Muslim performing salatul-istikhara should silently seek refuge with Allah from Shaytan, and then recite the sana (thana); followed by the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah of the Quran. The proof for these instructions is found in the hadith of Bukhari which declares, "**The only thing which should be read prior to the Fatihah is the 'Refuge' and the 'bismiallah**.'"

Sana (thana):

This act of worship is accomplished by silently saying: "Subhana kallahumma wa bi hamdika wa tabarakasmuka wa ta'ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghairuka (Glory to You, O Allah, and to You is the praise, and blessed is Your name, and exalted is Your majesty, and there is none to be worshipped besides You)."

سبحانك اللهم و بحمدك، وتبارك اسمك، و تعالى جدك، ولا إله غيرك

The proof for this practice is the hadith of Imam Muslim,

wherein 'Abda narrated: "**Umar b. al-Khattab used to recite loudly (loudly only for demonstration purposes) these words: Subhanak Allahumma wa bi hamdika wa tabarakasmuka wa ta'ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghairuka (Glory to Thee, O Allah, and Thine is the Praise, and Blessed is Thy name and Exalted is Thy Majesty and there is no other object of worship beside Thee)...**"

It is also worth mentioning that another supplication is recorded in a hadith collected by Bukhari, Abu Huraira reportedly said: "**Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) used to keep silent between the Takbir and the recitation of Qur'an (before Al-Fatihah of the first rakah) and that interval of silence used to be a short one. I said to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) 'May my parents be sacrificed for you! What do you say in the pause between Takbir and the recitation?' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'I say, 'Allahumma, ba'id baini wa baina khatayaya kama ba'adta baina-l-mashriqi wa-l-maghrib. Allahumma, naqqim min khatayaya kama yunaqqa-ththawbu-l-abyadu mina-ddanas. Allahumma, ighsil khatayaya bil-ma'i wa-th-thalji wal-barad (This translates into English as: "O Allah! Set me apart from my sins (faults) as the East and West are set apart from each other and clean me from sins as a white garment is cleaned of dirt (after thorough washing). O Allah! Wash off my sins with water, snow and hail").'**"

Ta`awwudh (Seek refuge):

This act of worship is accomplished by silently saying: A'oodhu billahi minash-shaitanir-rajim (I seek refuge in Allah from Shaitan, the accursed one).

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم

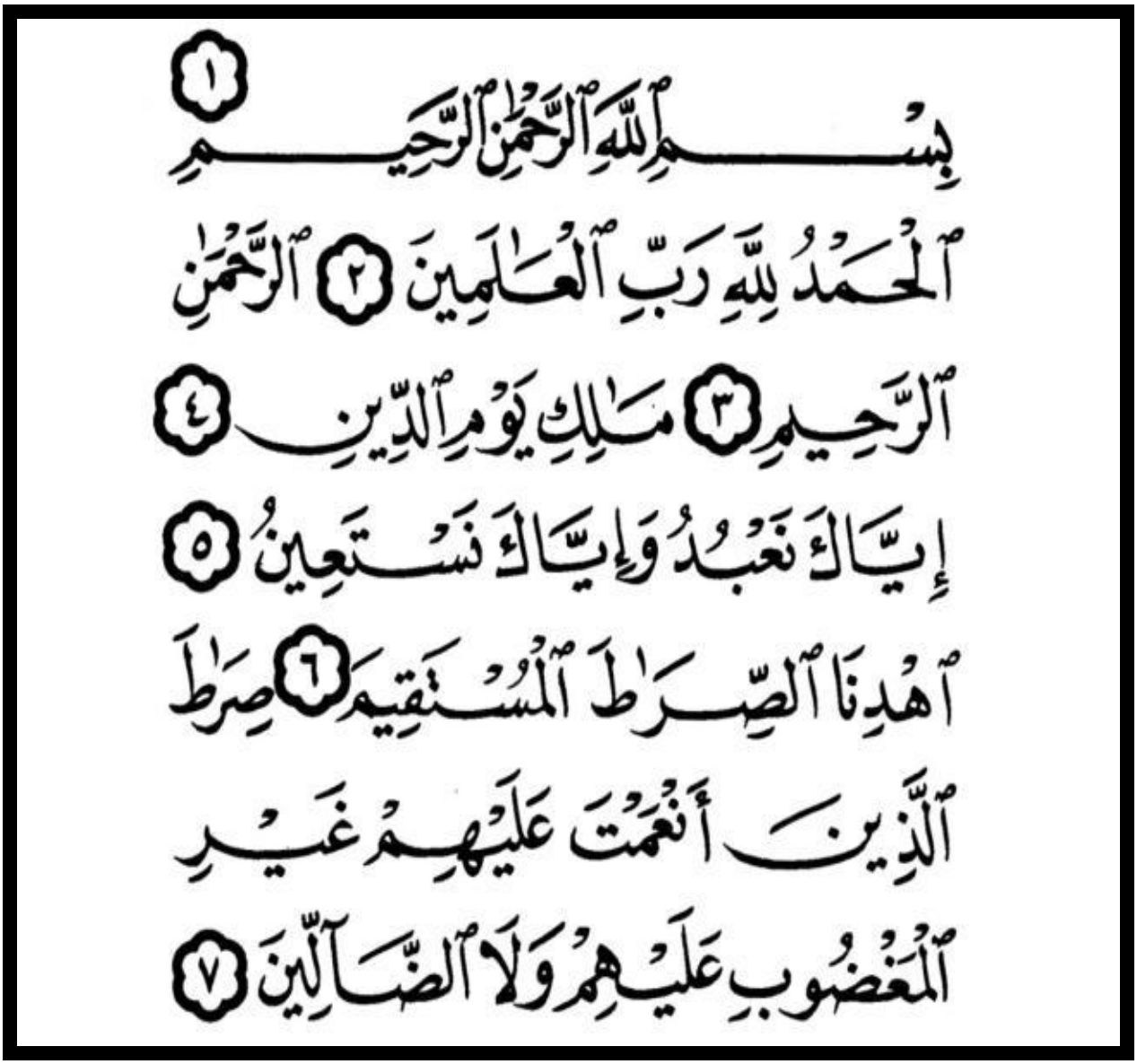
The proof for this practice is Surah Al-Nahl (16:98) of the Quran which reads: "**Fa-izaa qara'-tal-Qur-'aana fasta-'iz billaahi minash-Shaytanir-rajeem** (So when you recite the Quran, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaitan)."

Al-Basmallah:

Begin the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah by saying the Arabic words "Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim," which translates into English as "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful" either audibly or silently. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim wherein Anas reportedly said: "**I observed prayer along with the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) and with Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman, but I never heard any one of them reciting Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim loudly**." However, the permissibility for reciting Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim audibly is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Ibn Abbas narrated: "**Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) commenced his**

salah with 'Bismillah ir Rahman ir Rahim' (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful)."

Al-Fatihah:



The Arabic text reads: "**Bis-mil laa-hir rah-maa-nir ra-heem. Al-ham-du lil-laa-hi rab-bil `aa-la-meen. Ar-rah-maa nir-ra-heem. Maa-li-ki yaw-mid-deen. ee yaa-ka na `-bu-du wa ee yaa-ka nas-ta-`een. Ih di-nas si-raa-tal mus-ta-qeem Si-raa-tal la-**

zee-na an-`am-ta `a-lay-him, ghay-ril magh-doo-bi `a-lai-him wa-lad-daal-leen." This translates into English as: "In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the most merciful. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; the beneficent, the most merciful; master of the Day of Judgment; thee alone do we worship and thee alone do we beseech for help; guide us to the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors, not of those whom have earned your anger, nor of those who went astray)."

The evidence for reciting Surah Al-Fatihah in salat is the hadith Qudsi of Bukhari wherein Ubada bin As Samit narrated: Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) said, "**Whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah in his prayer, his prayer is invalid**." Further evidence is also found in the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: "**A prayer performed by someone who has not recited the Essence of the Quran (1) during it is deficient (and he repeated the word three times), incomplete. Someone said to Abu Hurayrah: [Even though] we are behind the imam? (2) He said: Recite it to yourself, for I have heard the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be up on him) say: Allah (mighty and sublime be He), had said: I have divided the prayer between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. When**

the servant says: Al-hamdu lillahi rabbi l-alamin (3), Allah (mighty and sublime be He) says: My servant has praised Me. And when he says: Ar-rahmani r-rahim (4), Allah (mighty and sublime be He) says: My servant has extolled Me, and when he says: Maliki yawmi d-din (5), Allah says: My servant has glorified Me - and on one occasion He said: My servant has submitted to My power. And when he says: Iyyaka na budu wa iyyaka nasta in (6), He says: This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. And when he says: Ihdina s-sirata l-mustaqim, siratal ladhina an amta alayhim ghayril-maghdubi alayhim wa la d-dallin (7), He says: This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for.'"

Saying, "ameen" at the conclusion of Surah Al-Fatihah:

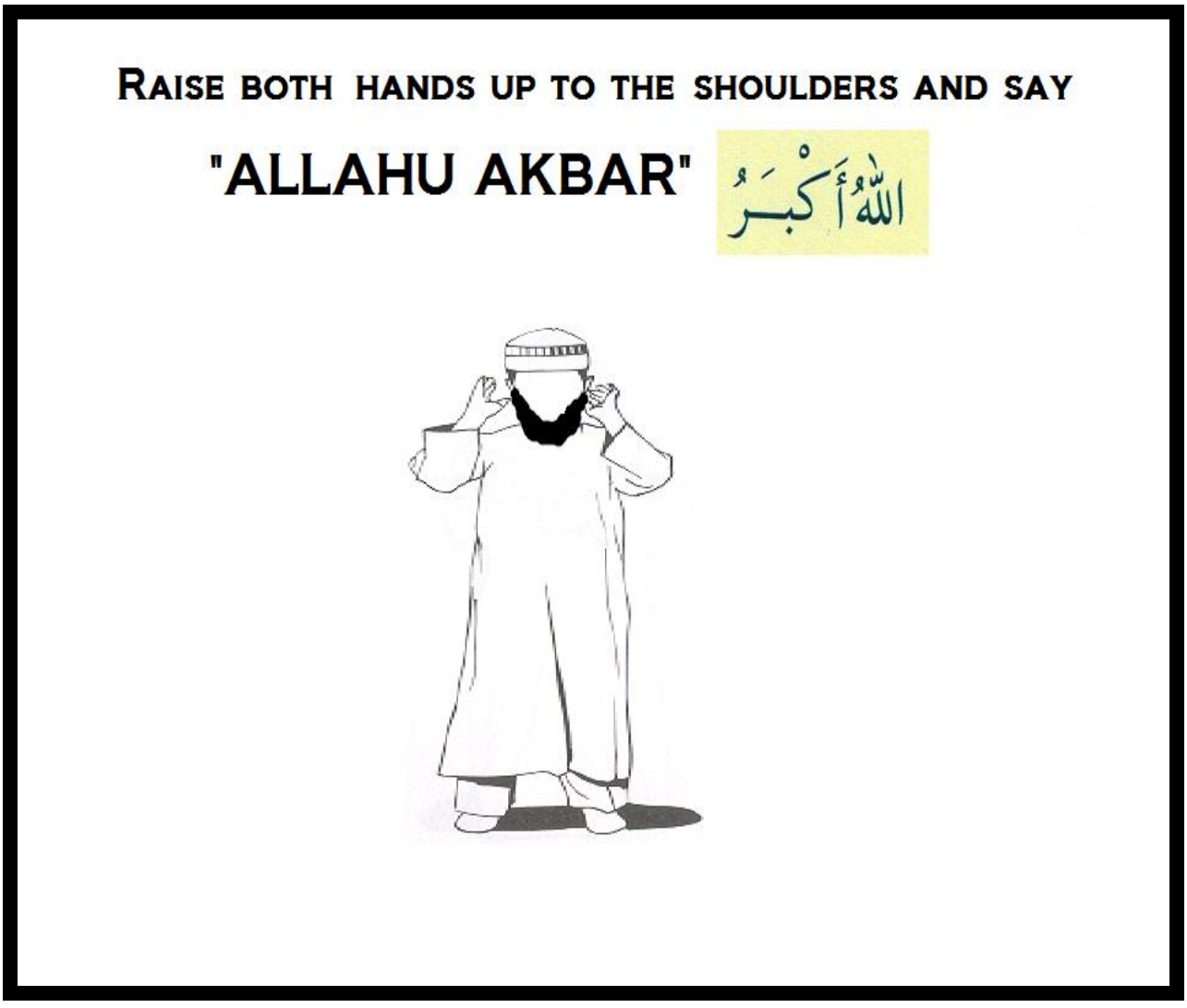
Lastly, after reciting surah Al-Fatihah, one should then say "ameen." (silently in a silent prayer and audibly in an audible prayer) The evidence for these ruling is a hadith in the collection of Tirmidhi wherein Alqama ibn Waeel narrated from his father: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) after reciting the words GHAIRIL MAGDUBI ALAIHIM WA LAD DALLIN, read AMEEN with a silent voice."** Also, in a hadith collected by Bukhari, Abu Huraira narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'When the Imam says: 'Ghair-il-Maghdubi 'Alaihim Walad-Dallin (i.e. not the path of those who earn Your Anger, nor the path of those who went**

astray, then you must say, 'ameen', for if one's utterance of 'ameen' coincides with that of the angels, then his past sins will be forgiven.'" However, it is important to note that the reciting of "ameen" should be elongated. The proof for this ruling is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Wail ibn Hujr narrated: "**Having heard the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) recite (in the salah the last verse of al-Fatihah) and say (Ameen), he prolonged his voice**."

SPECIAL NOTE: Keep the eyes fixated on the area where you intend to prostrate in order to avoid being distracted during salat. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Anas bin Malik narrated: "The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'What is wrong with those people who look towards the sky during the prayer?' His talk grew stern while delivering this speech and he said, 'They should stop (looking towards the sky during the prayer); otherwise their eye-sight would be taken away.'" Also, in another hadith collected by Bukhari, 'Aisha narrated: "**I asked Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) about looking hither and thither in prayer. He replied, 'It is a way of stealing by which Satan takes away (a portion) from the prayer of a person**.'" What is more, according to Baihaqi and Hakim, "The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to incline his head during prayer and fix his sight towards the ground.

Lastly, it is important to note that it is extremely advantageous to avoid wearing clothing adorned with distractive patterns or decorating the masjid or musella in a manner that will divert one's attention from their salat. The evidence for these rulings is also found in a hadith of Bukhari wherein Aisha narrated: "**Once the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) prayed on a Khamisa with marks on it and said, 'The marks on it diverted my attention..**'"

STEP 3: 2nd Takbir -(raf al-yadayn/raful yadayn)



After completing the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah in the qiyam position, the hands of the one performing salatul-istikhara are to again be raised to the shoulders after pronouncing a second takbir. The proof for the practice of raising one's hands to the shoulders while saying the second takbir is the hadith collected by Abu Dawud wherein Ali ibn AbuTalib narrated: **"When the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H) stood for offering the obligatory prayer, he uttered the takbir (Allah is most great) and raised his hands opposite to his shoulders; and he did like that when he finished recitation (of the Quran) and was about to bow..."** Further evidence is found in the hadith of Bukhari wherein Salim ibn 'Abdullah narrated from his father: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) used to raise his hands level with his shoulders when he began the prayer and when he said the takbir for ruku."**

STEP 4: Ruku (bowing with the palms of the hands resting on the knees)

After reciting the second takbir, the Muslim performing the prayer of istikhara should enter the ruku position by bowing in a manner which arcs the back into a 90 degree angle, and then rest the palm of the right hand securely on the right knee and the palm of the left hand securely on the left knee. While in

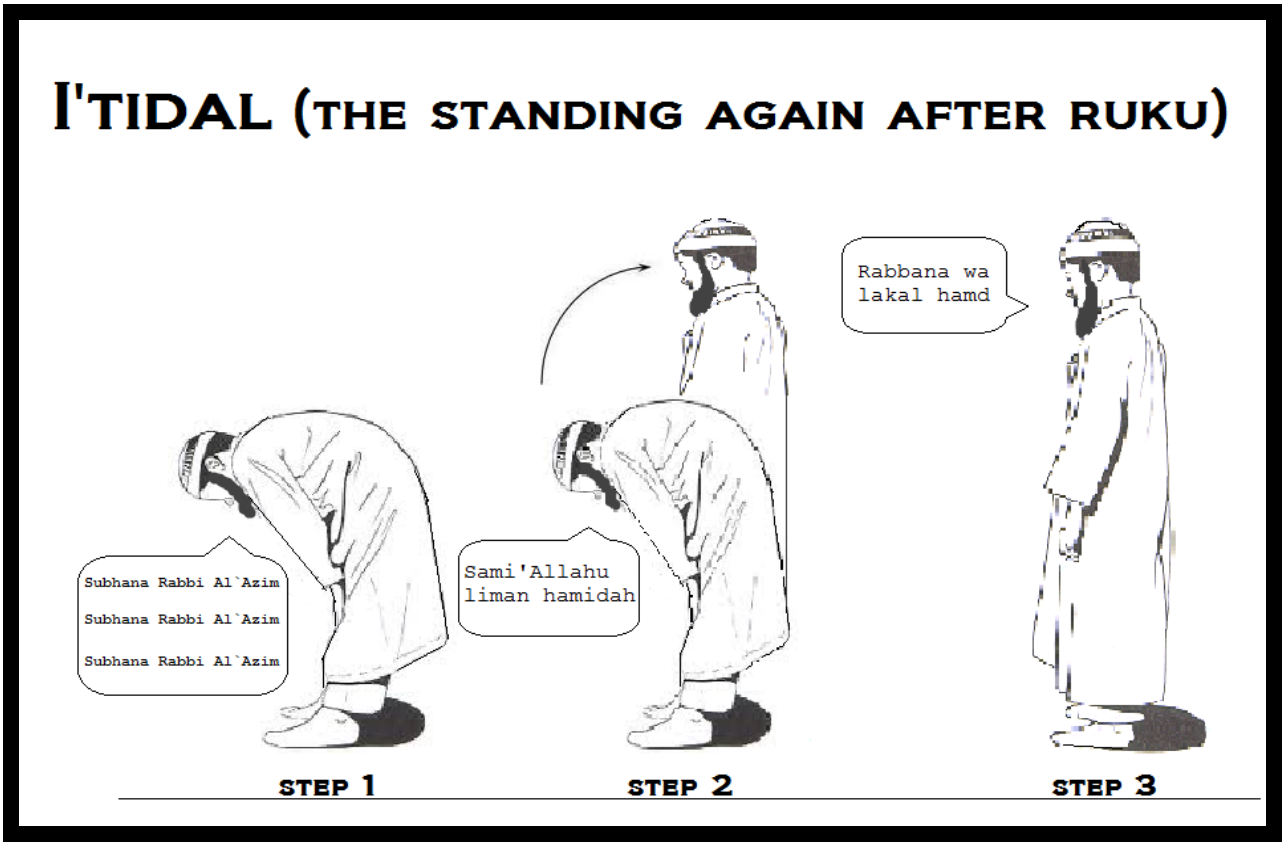
this position say, سبحان ربي العظيم - Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim (glory to my lord the great) three times.

AFTER SAYING THE TAKBIR AT THE END OF THE QIYAM POSITION, PROCEED TO THE RUKU POSITION BY BENDING OVER IN A 90 DEGREE ANGLE AND PLACE THE PALM OF THE RIGHT HAND OVER THE RIGHT KNEE AND THE PALM OF THE LEFT HAND OVER THE LEFT KNEE

The proof for the practice is the hadith of Ibn Majah wherein Ibn Masud reported: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'When anyone of you bows (ruku), let him say in his bowing: 'Subhana Rabbiyal-Azim (Glory is to my Lord, the Most Great)' three times; if he does that his bowing will be complete...**"

STEP 6: Qawma (the standing again after ruku) and observing I'tidal

Next, after saying سبحان ربي العظيم - Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim (glory to my lord the highest) three times, slowly straighten your back toward an upright position (qawma) while simultaneously saying, سمع الله لمن حمده - Sami'Allahu liman hamidah (Allah hears those who praise him), ربنا ولك الحمد - Rabbana wa lakal hamd (our Lord, all praise is for you)." Also, make sure that your back is completely straight after standing upright from the ruku to establish I'tidal.



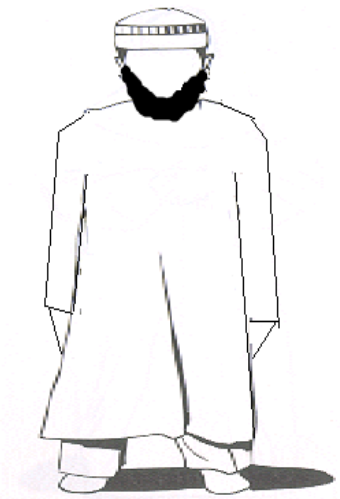
The evidence for this practice is a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim wherein Hudhayfah narrated: **"I prayed with the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.).....; He (P.B.U.H.) would bow (in ruku) and say: سبحان ربي العظيم 'Glory be to my Mighty Lord' (Subhanah Rabbi-al-Adheem)..."** Furthermore, a hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Huraira narrates: **"When the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, سمع الله لمن حمده 'Sami' a-l-lahu Liman hamida,'(Allah heard those who praises Him), he would say, ربنا ولك الحمد 'rabbana wa-laka-l-hamd.'..."** Lastly, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari narrated by Abu Hurayra reports **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) entered the mosque and a man entered and prayed. He came and greeted the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) who returned the greeting and said, 'Go back and pray. You have not prayed.' He (the man) prayed and came and greeted the Prophet P.B.U.H.) a second time, who again said three times, 'Go back and pray for you have not prayed.' He (the man) said, 'By the One who sent you with the truth, I cannot do any better than that, so teach me.' He (P.B.U.H.)said, 'When you stand for the prayer, say the takbir and then recite something you know well from the Qur'an and then do ruku' until you are at rest in your ruku. Then stand back up until you are completely upright..... Do that throughout all of your prayer.'"**

STEP 6: <u>The 3rd Takbir after rising up from ruku</u>

After completing the ruku phase of the salat by standing fully erect after saying ربنا ولك الحمد Rabbana wa lakal hamd (our Lord, all praise is for you), it is permissible to either raise both hands up to the shoulders during the takbir or simply leave them hanging down by the thighs prior to proceeding with the sujud position.

BEFORE ENTERING SAJDA, ONE HAS THE OPTION TO EITHER RAISE THEIR HANDS OR NOT WHEN SAYING THE TAKBIR:

"ALLAHU AKBAR" اللهُ أَكْبَرُ



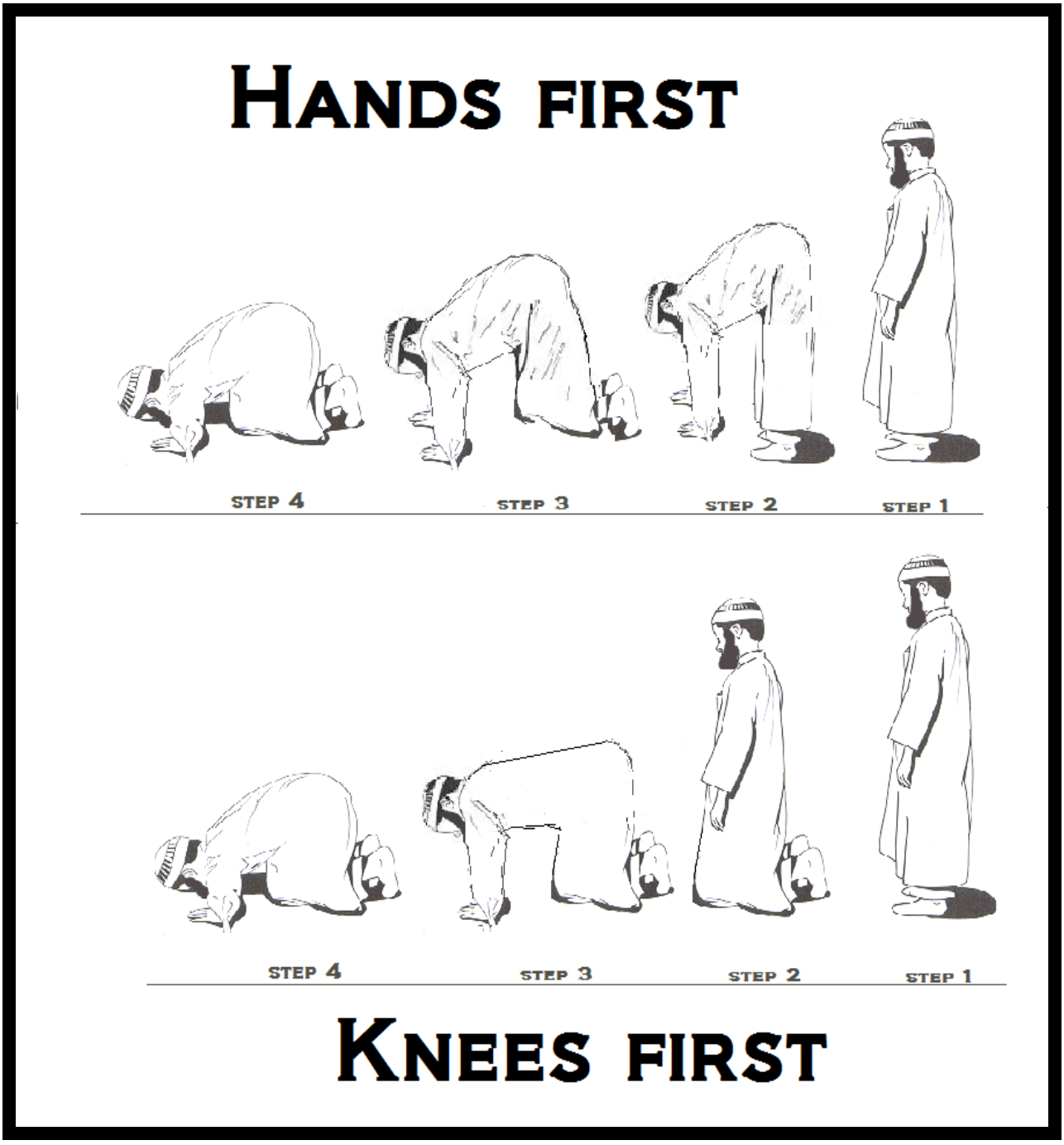
The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Abu Humaid narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) came up (from ruku) and stood straight until every vertebra (of his Spinal Column) came back to its (natural) place**." Thus, implying that in order to fully straighten the spine upon rising from ruku, the entire body should be returned to its natural standing position; which involves the arms hanging down versus being folded; i.e., justifying why the arms and hands are hanging down in the first place. This is also the position of Shaykh Albani (RA), but Allah knows best!

Regarding the permissibility of raising the hands up to the shoulders during the third takbir after rising up from ruku, the evidence for this practice is found in a hadith collected by Bukhari which reports as follows: "**Abu Qilaba saw Malik ibn al-Huwayrith praying - he said the takbir and raised his hands. When he went to do ruku he raised his hands. When he raised his head from ruku (to stand upright), he raised his hands. He related that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) had done the same as that.**"

After pronouncing the 3rd Takbir prior to entering the sujud (sajdah) position:

After completing the ruku portion of salatul-istikhara by standing fully erect, one should then pronounce the third takbir

and prostrate on the ground. This position is referred to as sujud or sajdah. Furthermore, when entering the sujud position, a Muslim performing salat has the option to either prostrate by placing either their knees or hands down first.

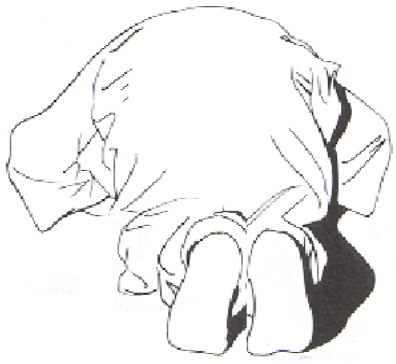


The evidence for entering sujud with the knees coming into contact with the ground before the hands is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Waa'il ibn Hajar narrated: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), when he did sujud placing his knees down (on the ground) before his hands, and when he got up he raised his hands before his knees**." This is the position accepted by the Hanafi, Shafi'i and Hanbali Madhabs. However, the Maliki Madhab prefers prostrating with the hands touching the ground before the knees. The evidence supporting the Maliki Madhab's position is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Huraira narrated: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said 'When one of you prostrates, he should not kneel as the animal kneels; instead, he should place his hands down before his knees**.'" In light of the above mentioned perspectives, it is worth mentioning that Shaykh al-Islam, Ibn Taymiyah (RA), in Al-Fataawa (22/449) reportedly said: "Praying in both ways is permissible, according to the consensus of the scholars. If a person wants to go down knees first or hands first, his prayer is valid in either case, according to the consensus of the scholars, but they disputed as to which is preferable." Furthermore, Shaykh Bin Baz (RA) is also of the opinion that: "As for going down on knees before the hands when prostrating, it is the better practice based on the hadith of Wa'il Ibn Hujr in this regard as well as other hadith to the same effect. However, some scholars view that one should

go down on the hands before the knees is based on the hadith of Abu Hurayrah in this regard. Nevertheless, there is a good range of flexibility in this respect. Thus, the salah will be valid whether one goes down on the knees before the hands or the contrary. However, dispute is on which practice is better. The sound opinion is that it is better to go down on the knees before the hands due to the above mentioned evidence. Nevertheless, if someone goes down on the hands before the knees, it will be unobjectionable and their salah will be valid. Furthermore, regarding the hadith of Abu Hurayrah which prohibits one from offering salah by kneeling down like a camel does not contradict the hadith of Wa'il. Rather, they coincide with each other; because, a camel kneels down on its hands before its legs. As for the statement concluding the hadith of Abu Hurayrah : (He should place his hands (on the ground) before placing his knees,) it is more likely, according to many hadith scholars, to be mistakenly misreported by some narrators. However, the right order of words is: (He should place his knees (on the ground) before placing his hands.) Thus, the first part of the hadith would go in line with the concluding part and thus the two hadith of Wa'il and that of Abu Hurayrah can be reconciled and the dispute may be removed. May Allah grant us success."

It is also important to note that there is also a difference of opinion regarding the position of the feet during sujud; namely, should the feet be placed together while prostrating or spaced apart. The evidence presented by those who prefer keeping the feet together during sujud is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Aishah (RA) reportedly said: "**I noticed that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) was not there and he had been with me in my bed. I found him prostrating, with his heels together and his toes turned towards the qiblah, ...**"

FEET TOGETHER DURING SUJUD (PROSTRATION)



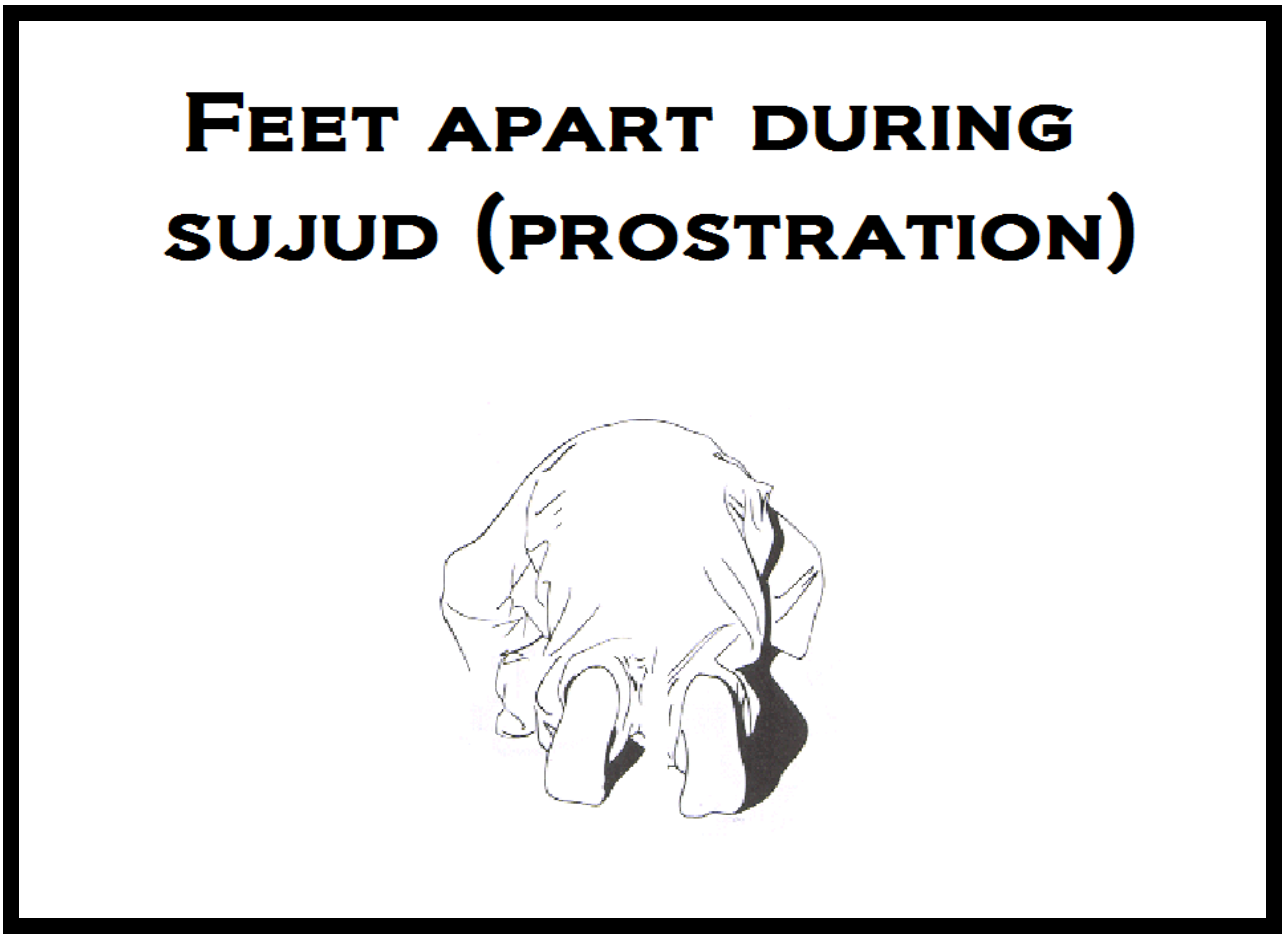
Based on the above mentioned hadith, keeping the feet together is a sunnah of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). As such, when

performing sajdah, one is permitted to prostrate with their feet together, while ensuring that the thighs and knees are separated. The evidence for keeping the knees and thighs separated during sujud is the hadith collected by Abu Dawud wherein Abu Humayd (RA) said, describing the prayer of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.): **"When he prostrated, he kept his thighs apart."** The knees will automatically separated with the thighs.

Nevertheless, those who prefer to keep their feet separated along with the thighs and knees during sajdah, maintaining that it is from the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) sunnah, cite as evidence supporting their position the above mentioned hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Humayd (RA) said, with regard to describing the prayer of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.): **"When He (P.B.U.H.) prostrated, He (P.B.U.H.) kept his thighs apart."** Their argument being, as declared by Al-Shawkaani (RA): "The words 'He (P.B.U.H.) kept his thighs apart' mean that He (P.B.U.H.)kept his thighs, knees and feet apart.'"

A final point on this matter is the statement of Al-Nawawi(RA) who reported: "Al-Shaafa'i and his companions said: 'It is mustahab (recommended) for the one who is prostrating to keep his knees and feet apart.'" Therefore, the scholars who hold this opinion maintain that since it is recommended to keep the knees and thighs apart when prostrating, quite naturally the

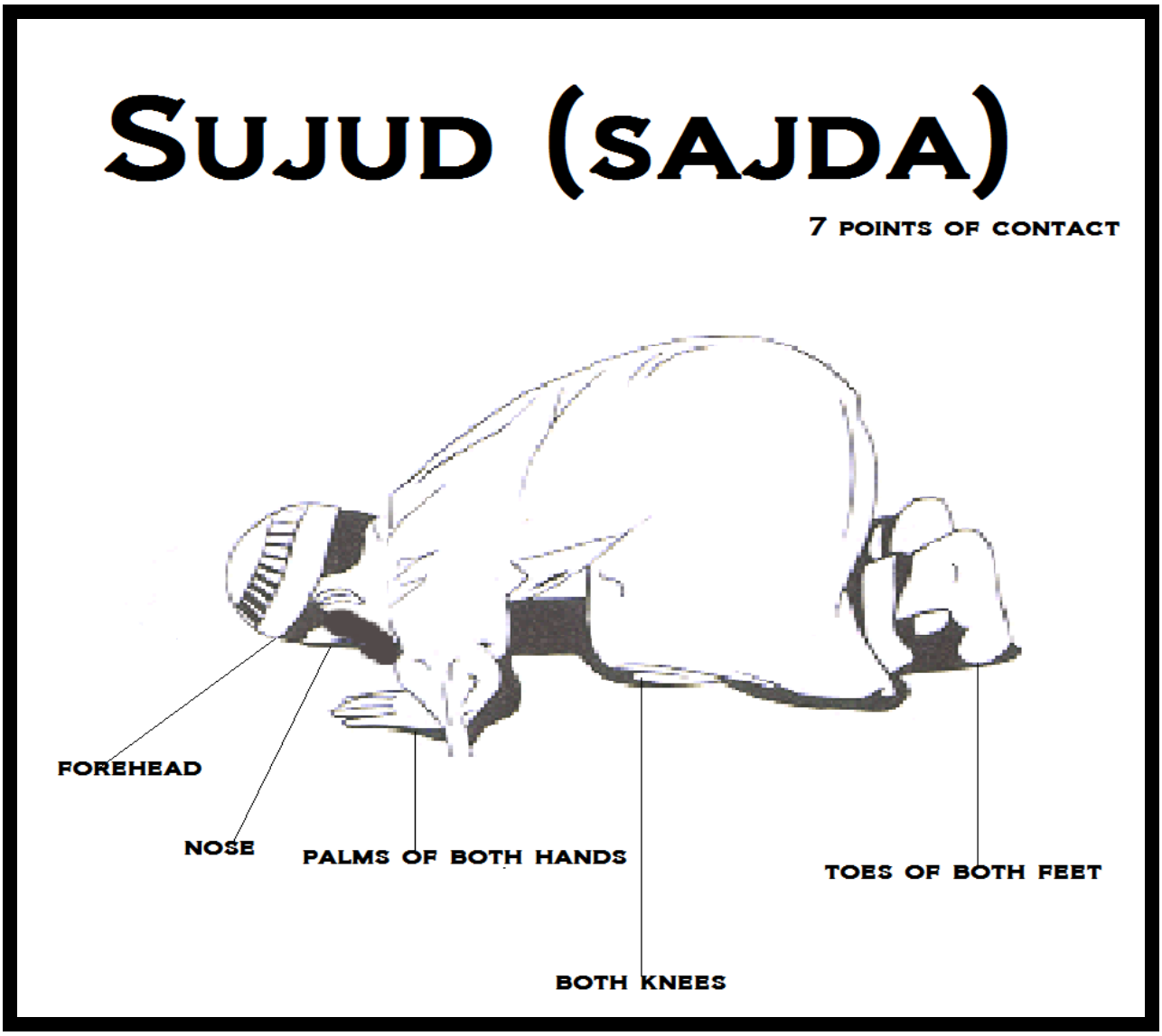
feet should also follow the knees and thighs; i.e., the feet should also be kept apart when prostrating.



Entering the sujud (sajdah) position After pronouncing the 3rd Takbir:

After completing the ruku portion of salatul-istikhara by standing fully erect, one should then pronounce the third takbir and proceed by prostrating in a manner which results in the forehead and nose, palms of both hands, both knees, and the toes

of both feet simultaneously being placed on the ground. This position is referred to as sujud or sajdah.



In fact, the Muslim performing salat will be deemed negligent if they fail to prostration without establishing seven points of contact with the ground; namely, the above mentioned forehead and nose, palms of both hands, both knees, and the toes of both feet. Furthermore, the forearms of the Muslim performing salat

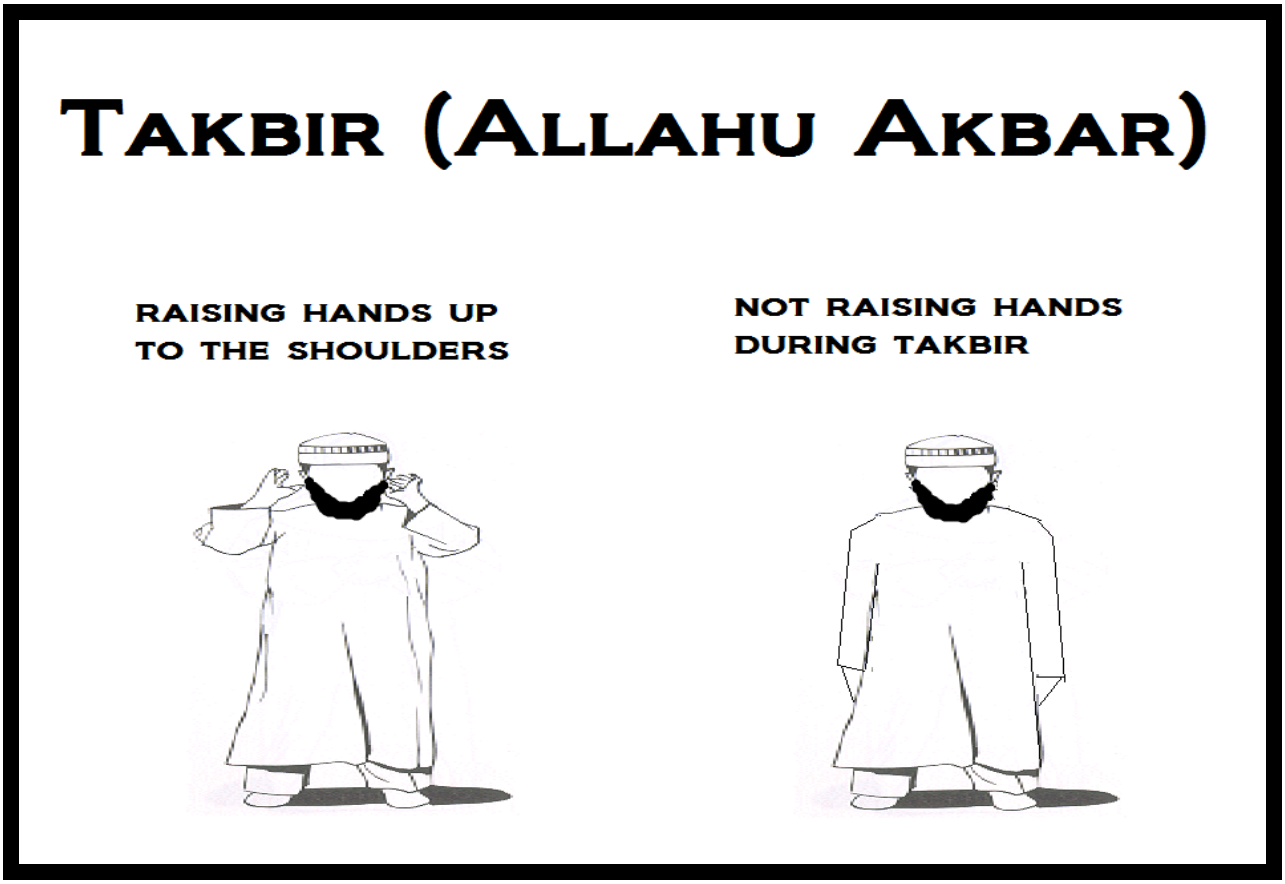
should also be positioned away from the ground and away from the body; as if they were positioned to do pushups. The toes should also be facing the Qibla and the fingers of the hands should not be spaced apart. The evidence for these rulings is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abbas narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) was ordered (by Allah) to prostrate on seven parts and not to tuck up the clothes or hair (while praying). Those parts are: the forehead (along with the tip of nose), both hands, both knees, and the (toes of) both feet."** What is more, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Amr bin Ata reports: **"I was sitting with some of the companions of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) and we were discussing about the way of praying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Abu Humaid As-Saidi said, 'I remember the prayer of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) better than any one of you.... In prostrations, he placed both his hands on the ground with the forearms away from the ground and away from his body, and his toes were facing the Qibla...'"** What is more, the ahadith of Abu Dawud and Ibn Khuzaimah reports: **"(In sujud), He (P.B.U.H.) would support himself on his palms [and spread them]',and 'put his fingers together.'"**

Lastly, according to the fatwa of Shaykh Bin Baz (RA) regarding the manner of the Prophet's salah, he reportedly said: "The fingers and toes should be directed towards the Qiblah; the

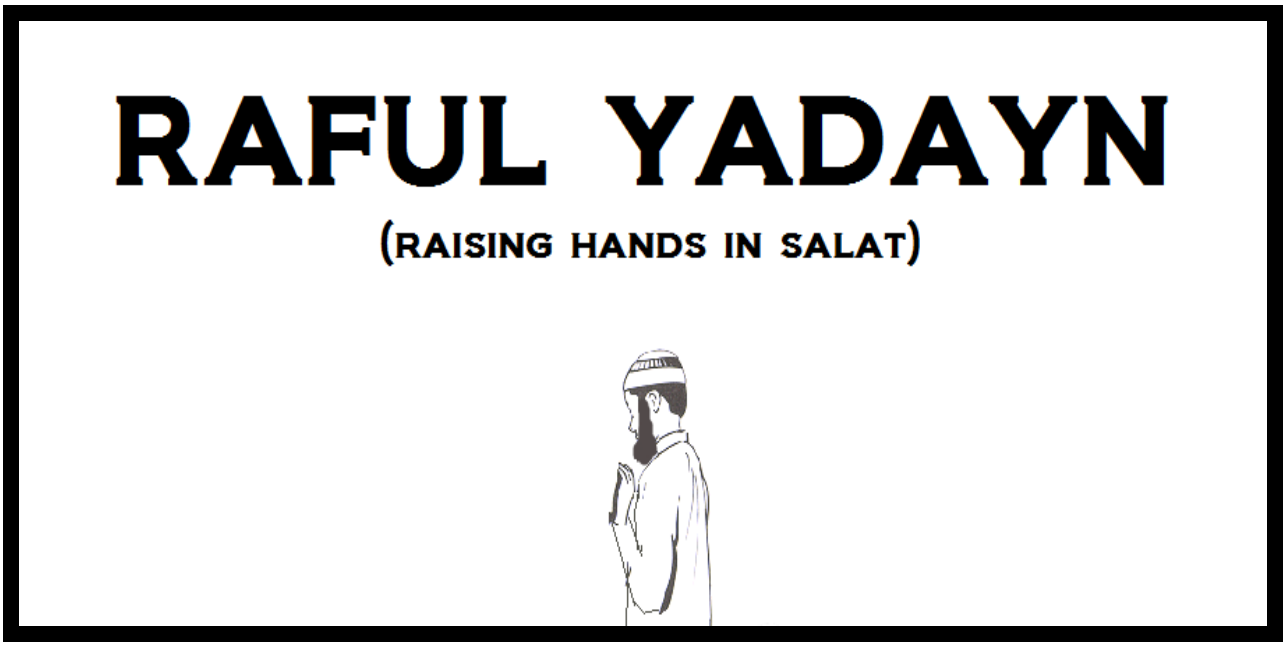
hands should be stretched, and the fingers should be close together; not separated. The Muslim should prostrate on seven parts of the body: the forehead, the nose, both hands, both knees, and the internal parts of the tips of the toes. (It is preferable that) one should say thrice or more (in odd numbers), "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la (Glorified is my Lord, the Supreme)."

The process of Sajdah described in full detail:

1) Pronounce the third takbir (Allahu Akbar) after standing fully erect from ruku. (One has the option to either raise the hands up to the shoulders or to not raise them at all.)



The evidence for the permissibility of raising the hands after standing erect from ruku and prior to prostrating in the sujud position is a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Salim bin 'Abdullah reported: "**My father said, 'Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) used to raise both his hands up to the level of his shoulders when opening the prayer; and on saying the Takbir for bowing; and on raising his head from bowing he used to do the same, and then say "Sami a-l-lahu Liman hamida, Rabbana walaka-l-hamd...**"



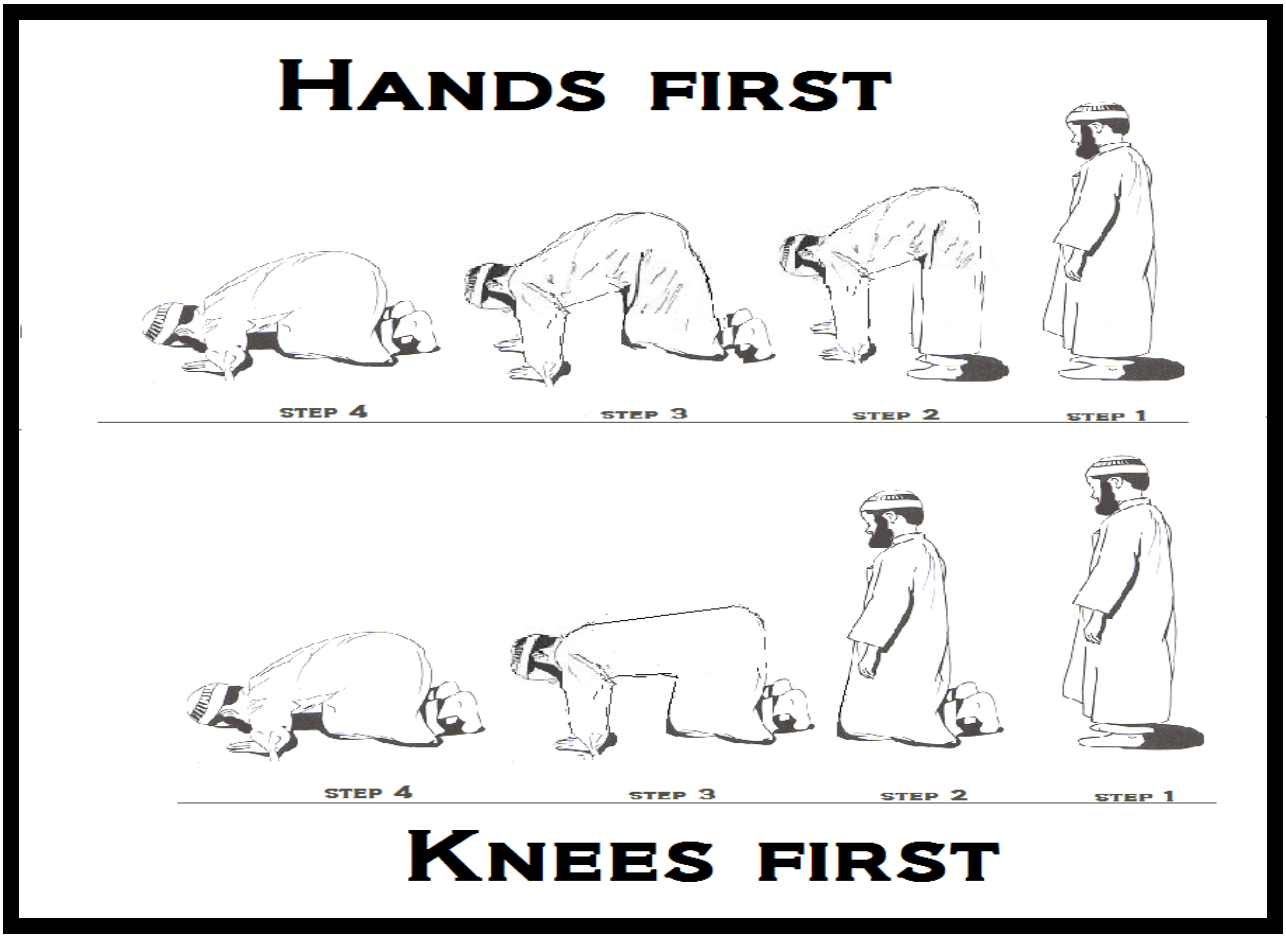
Likewise, the evidence for not raising the hands before entering sujud is found in a hadith from the collection of Tirmidhi wherein Alqama narrated that 'Abdullah ibn Masud (ra) reportedly said: "**Should I not demonstrate the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) for you? He (P.B.U.H.) performed the prayer, and did not raise his hands except at the initial takbir.**"

NOT RAISING HANDS BEFORE ENTERING SUJUD

In light of the above mentioned ahadith, it is important to note that the scholars have not reached a consensus as to which practice is ideal. Therefore, one has the option to perform either of these acts of worship. It is also worth mentioning that regarding the practice of raful yadayn (raising the hands in salat), the practice of the Shafii Madhab is to raise the hands in four instances; namely, with takbiratul ihram (starting the salat with the first saying of "Allahu Akbar"), before and after the ruku position, and after standing up for the third rakah of a four rakah prayer. The method employed by the Hanbali Madhab closely resembles the practice of the Shafii Madhab in that the Hanbalis prefer to raise their hands in three instances; namely, with takbiratul ihram, and before and after the ruku position. Whereas, the practice of the Hanafi Madhab is

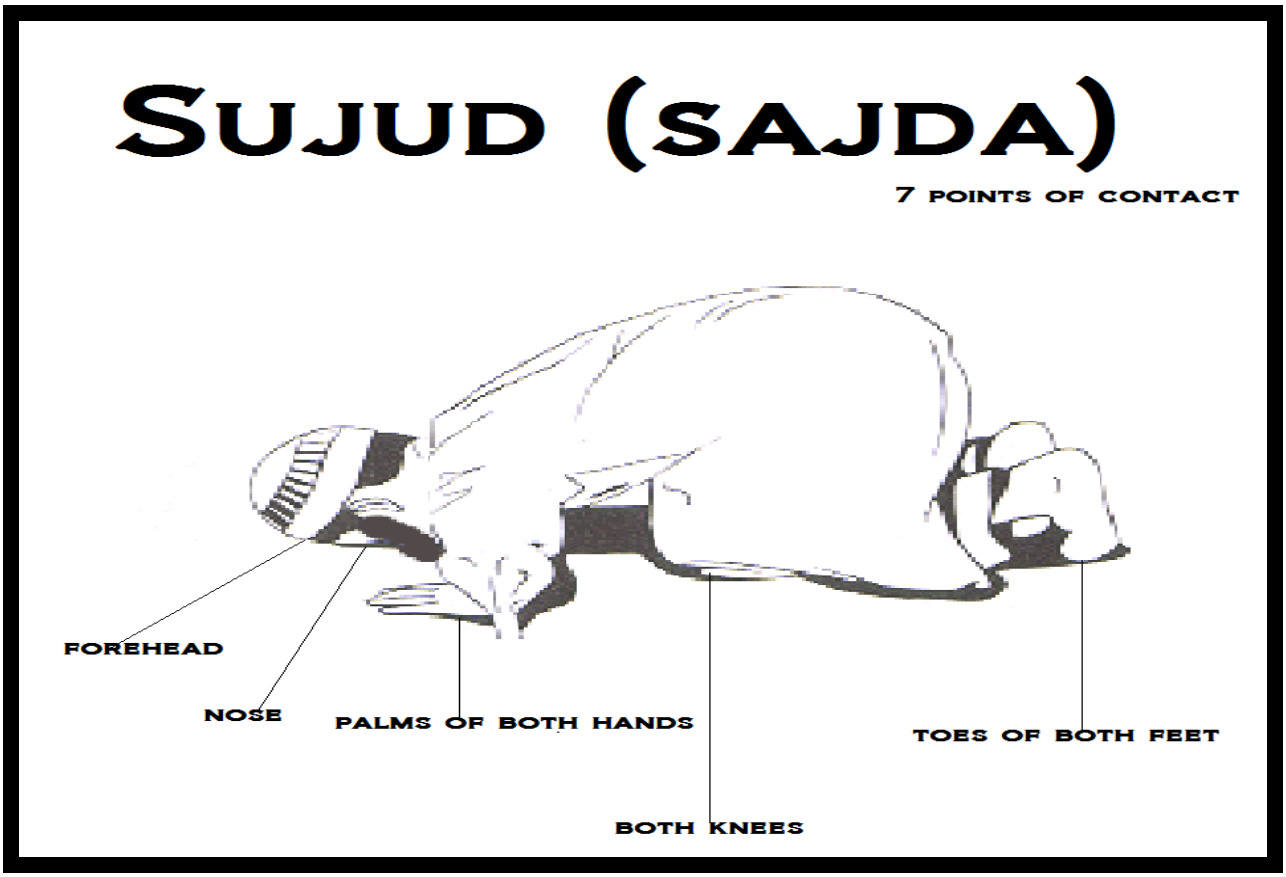
to only raise the hands in the beginning of the salat with the opening takbir (takbiratul ihram). Lastly, the method of the Maliki Madhab varies between the practice of raising only the hands at the beginning of the salat with the opening takbir to raising the hands in three instances; namely, with takbiratul ihram, and before and after the ruku position.

2) Enter the sujud/sajdah position (prostration) by placing the palms of the hands on the ground before the knees or prostrate by placing the knees on the ground before the hands.



The evidence for entering sujud with the knees coming into contact with the ground before the hands is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Waa'il ibn Hajar narrated: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), when he did sujud placing his knees down (on the ground) before his hands, and when he got up he raised his hands before his knees**." This is the position accepted by the Hanafi, Shafi'i and Hanbali Madhabs. However, the Maliki Madhab prefers prostrating with the hands touching the ground before the knees. The evidence supporting the Maliki Madhab's position is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Huraira narrated: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said 'When one of you prostrates, he should not kneel as the animal kneels; instead, he should place his hands down before his knees**.'"

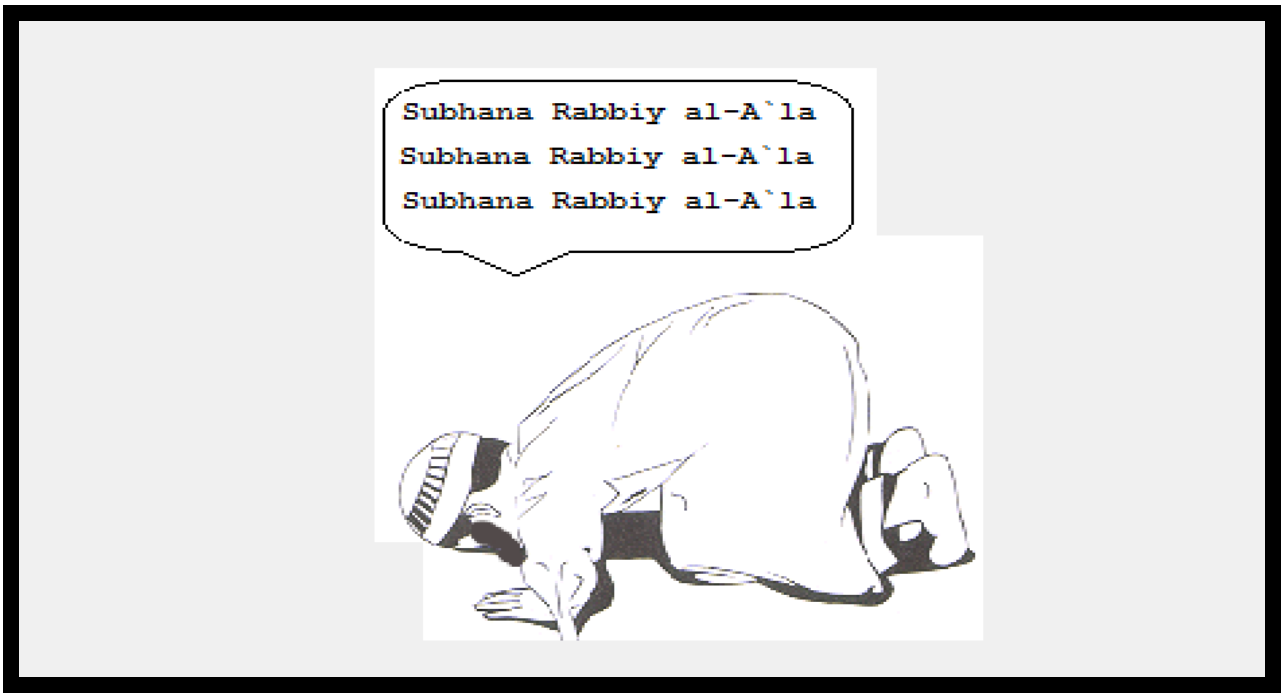
3) Once in the first sujud of the first rakah, align the fingers and toes towards the Qiblah, positioning the palms away from the head and body (level with the shoulders or level with the ears), as with the position for doing pushup. The fingers of the hands should also be close together and not separated. The nose and forehead should also be placed on the ground in order to establish seven points of the contact in sujud; i.e., the forehead and nose, both hands, both knees, and the tips of the toes of both feet should establish contact with the ground.



The evidence for these rulings is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abbas narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) was ordered (by Allah) to prostrate on seven parts .... Those parts are: the forehead (along with the tip of nose), both hands, both knees, and the (toes of) both feet."** Moreover, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Amr bin Ata reports: **"I was sitting with some of the companions of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) and we were discussing about the way of praying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Abu Humaid As-Saidi said, 'I remember the prayer of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) better than any one of you.... In prostrations, he placed both his hands on**

the ground with the forearms away from the ground and away from his body, and his toes were facing the Qibla...'" What is more, the ahadith of Abu Dawud and Ibn Khuzaimah reports: "**(In sujud), He (P.B.U.H.) would support himself on his palms [and spread them]',and 'put his fingers together**.'"

4) After establishing seven points of contact with the ground, become completely at ease/relaxed while in sujud (keep eyes open) and say, "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la" (Glorified is my Lord, the highest/supreme) three times. (Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la can be repeated more than three times, so long as it is done in odd number units such as 3, 5, 7, etc.)



The evidence for this practice is the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abu Huraira narrated: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.)**

said: 'The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication (in this state).'" Furthermore, a hadith collected by Abu Dawud reports, supplicate in sujud by saying: "Glory is to my Lord, the Most High."

5) Raise up from prostrating (sajdah) saying "Allahu Akbar" into a fully relaxed sitting position (jalsah).

JALSAH POSITION

RAISE UP FROM PROSTRATING (SAJDAH) SAYING "ALLAHU AKBAR" INTO A FULLY RELAXED SITTING POSITION (JALSAH) WITH THE PALMS OF THE HANDS RESTING ON THE THIGHS AND KNEES

THE BACK SHOULD ALSO BE MADE STRAIGHT (FULLY ERECT)

BEND THE LEFT FOOT AND SITTING ON IT (INSIDE ANKLE), WHILE KEEPING THE RIGHT FOOT PROPPED UP (HEEL IN THE AIR AND THE TOES ON THE GROUND POINTING FORWARD TOWARDS THE QIBLAH).

While in jalsah, the palms of the hands should be positioned on the thighs and knees (the right palm on the right thigh and knee and the left palm on the left thigh and knee), while simultaneously bending the left foot and

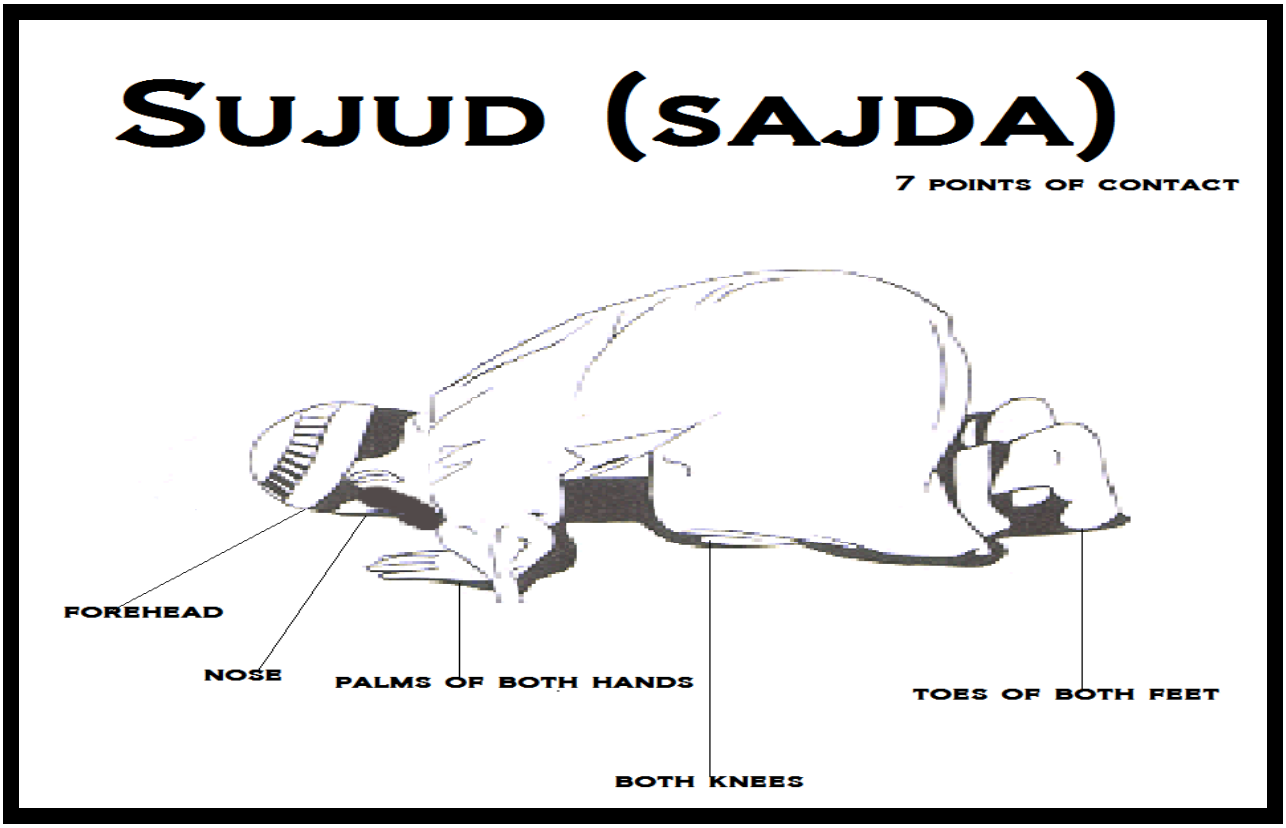
sitting on it (inside ankle), while keeping the right foot propped up (heel in the air and the toes on the ground pointing forward towards the Qiblah). The back and head should also be made straight (eyes positioned on the place of prostration).

The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ikrima reported: "..... **He (P.B.U.H.) used to say Takbir on prostrating and on raising his head from prostration**....." What is more, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Huraira reports: "..... **prostrate calmly till you feel at ease and then raise (your head) and sit with Calmness till you feel at ease and then prostrate with calmness till you feel at ease in prostration and do the same in the whole of your prayer**." Furthermore, a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that was narrated by Abdullah bin Zubayr reports: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) sat in prayer, he placed the left foot between his thigh and calf and stretched the right foot and placed his left hand on his left thigh and his right hand on his right thigh**." Lastly, a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated from Muhammad ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Ata’ reports that Abu Humayd al-Saa’idi said: "..... **Then he (P.B.U.H.) went down in prostration, then he (P.B.U.H.) said 'Allaahu akbar' and held his upper arms away from his body and**

spread out his toes. Then he (P.B.U.H.) would tuck his foot under his body and sit on it. Then he (P.B.U.H.) sat upright (in jalsah) until every bone returned to its place.'"

Special note: In this position one can make duah to Allah. The evidence for this practice is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abdullah ibn Abbas reportedly said: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to say between the two prostrations: 'Allaahumma ighfir li warhamni wajburni wahdini warzuqni (O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, heal me, and provide for me)**.'"

6) Pronounce the fourth takbir (Allahu Akbar) while in jalsah to initiate the second sajdah of the first rakah.



Once seven points of contact are established with the ground during the second sajdah of the first rakah, calmly say, "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la (Glorified is my Lord, the highest/supreme) three or more times in odd number units.

The evidence for this practice is a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein A'isha reportedly said, "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to often say in his ruku and sajda, 'Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and by Your praise. O Allah, forgive me!' ....**'"

7) After calmly saying, "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la (Glorified is my Lord, the highest/supreme) three times, once again, raise up from prostrating in sujud into a fully relaxed sitting (jalsah) position.

JALSAH POSITION

RAISE UP FROM PROSTRATING (SAJDAH) SAYING "ALLAHU AKBAR" INTO A FULLY RELAXED SITTING POSITION (JALSAH) WITH THE PALMS OF THE HANDS RESTING ON THE THIGHS AND KNEES

THE BACK SHOULD ALSO BE MADE STRAIGHT (FULLY ERECT)

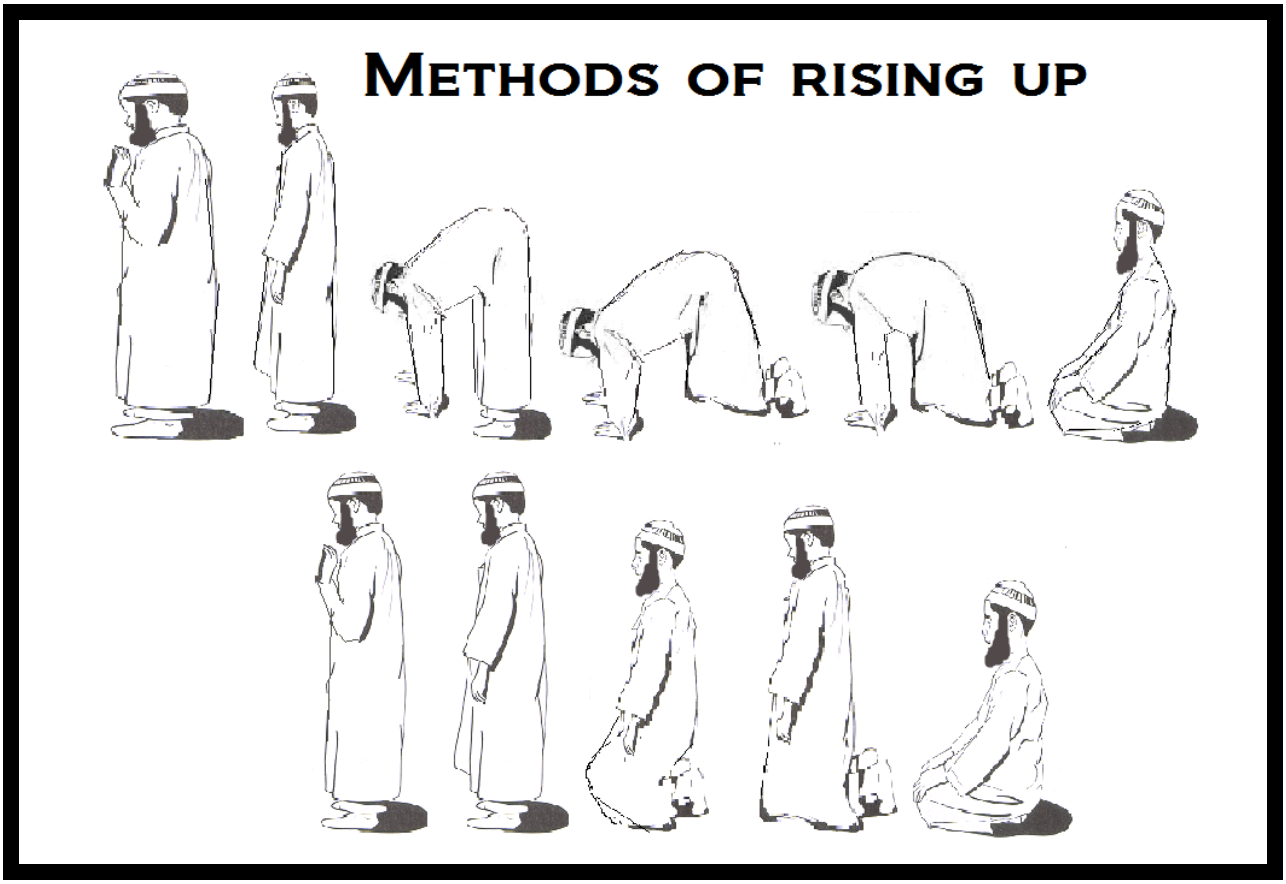
BEND THE LEFT FOOT AND SITTING ON IT (INSIDE ANKLE), WHILE KEEPING THE RIGHT FOOT PROPPED UP (HEEL IN THE AIR AND THE TOES ON THE GROUND POINTING FORWARD TOWARDS THE QIBLAH).

While in the second jalsah of the first rakah, again place the palms of the hands on top of the thighs and knees, while simultaneously bending the left foot and sitting on it (inside ankle), while keeping the right foot propped up (heel in the air and the toes on the ground pointing forward towards the Qiblah). Then pronounce the fifth takbir (Allahu Akbar), with the back and head being made straight, while the eyes remain fixed on the place of prostration. Once the back is fully straight (this sitting for rest a longer while before standing is termed "Jalsah al-Istiraha"),

The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ikrima reported: "**..... He (P.B.U.H.) used to say Takbir on prostrating and on raising his head from prostration**....." What is more, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Huraira reports: "**..... prostrate calmly till you feel at ease and then raise (your head) and sit with Calmness till you feel at ease and then prostrate with calmness till you feel at ease in prostration and do the same (raise the head) in the whole of your prayer**." Furthermore, a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that was narrated by Abdullah bin Zubayr reports: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) sat in prayer, he placed the left foot between his thigh and calf and**

stretched the right foot and placed his left hand on his left thigh and his right hand on his right thigh." Lastly, a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn 'Ata' reports that Abu Humayd al-Saa'idi said: "..... **Then he (P.B.U.H.) would tuck his foot under his body and sit on it. Then he (P.B.U.H.) sat upright (in jalsah) until every bone returned to its place**.'"

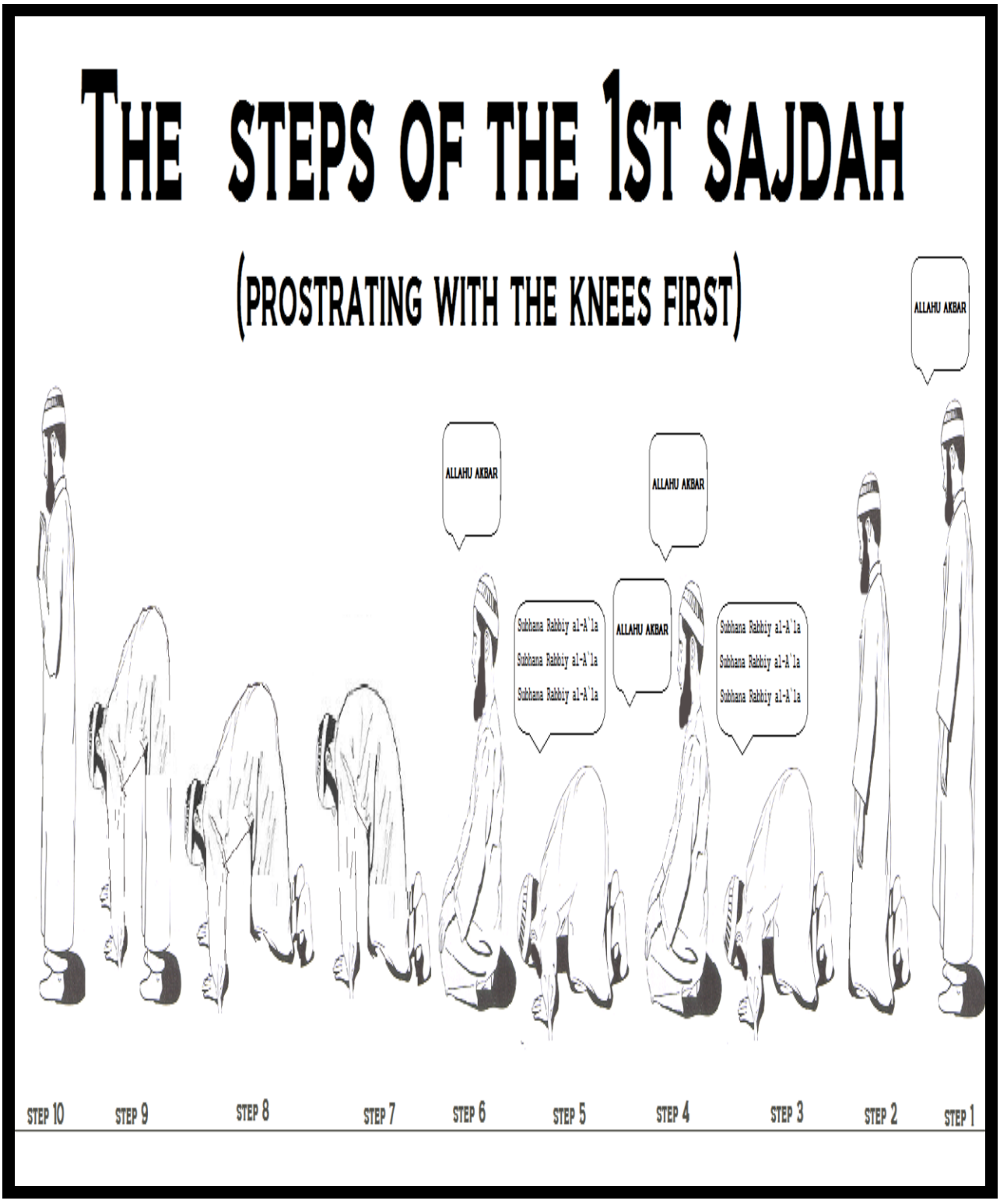
8) After pronouncing the fifth takbir (Allahu Akbar), while sitting in the jalsah position, calmly stand up and raise the hands up to the shoulders in order to enter the second qiyam position of salatul istikhara.

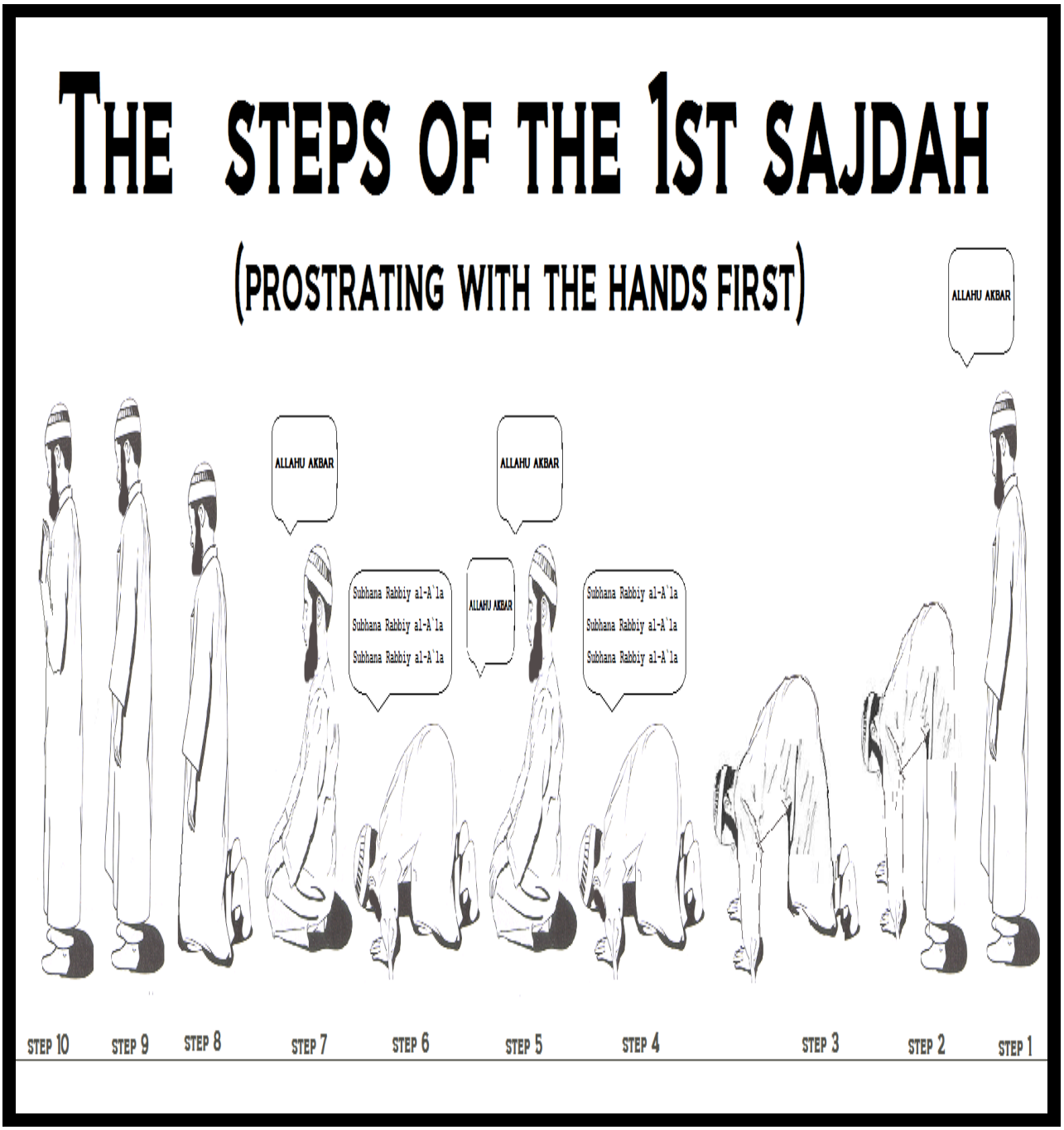


During the process of standing up from sujud after pronouncing the fifth takbir (Allahu Akbar), one should do so by either raising the hands before the knees or by placing the hands down on the ground to assist with raising the knees and body to a standing (qiyam) position. The evidence for these rulings is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Waa'il ibn Hajar narrated: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), when he did sujud placing his knees down (on the ground) before his hands, and when he got up (from sujud) he raised his hands before his knees**." Also, the hadith collected by Bukhari reports: "**He (P.B.U.H.) would get up for the second rak'ah, supporting himself on the ground (with the hands)**." Furthermore, a narration of Baihaqi (RA) reports: "The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) would clench his fists during salat, supporting himself with his hands when getting up." It is also worth mentioning that this is the opinion of Shaykh Albani (RA) who reported: "He (P.B.U.H.) would sit up straight on his left foot, at ease, until every bone returned to its proper place, then stand up, supporting himself on the ground; and he would clench his fists (literally, as one kneading dough), supporting himself with his hands when standing up."

It is also important to note that the scholars have not reached a consensus regarding the ideal method of rising up to qiyam from sujud. The opinion of some is that getting up by the

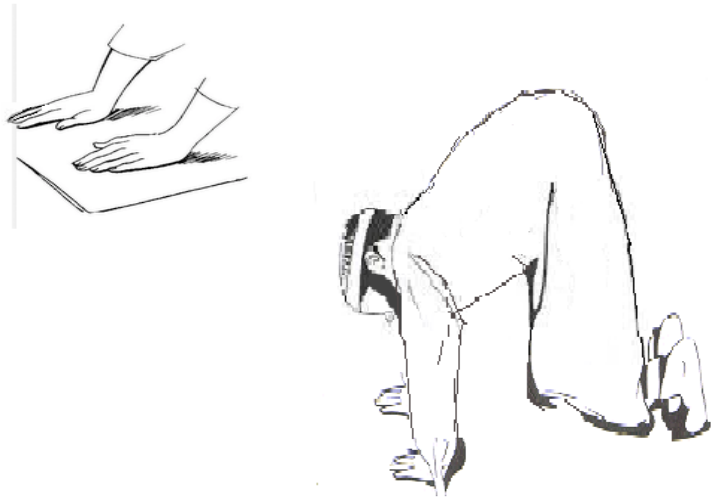
support of fists is effective only at the time of necessity, such as due to old age, illness, obesity, etc.





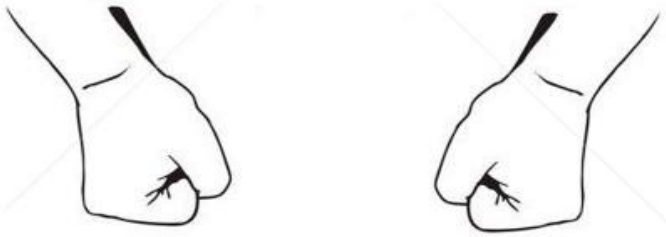
It is worth mentioning that when returning to the qiyam (standing) position from sujud, Muslims generally engage in the practice of doing so by either placing the palms flat on the ground, as with performing sujud or by placing the knuckles down on the ground; similar to the method one uses to knead dough.

PALMS DOWN



CLENCHED FISTS

AAJIN (AS WITH KNEADING DOUGH)



Both methods are supported in ahadith. However, the scholars have not reached a consensus regarding which method is ideal. Thus, making either method acceptable.

The hadith used as evidence to prove that when a Muslim stands from sujud, in order to enter the qiyam position of the next rakah, he should do so by supporting himself on clenched fists like a person kneading dough, reads as follows: "**When the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) would stand up in salah he would place his hands upon the ground just as an aajin does**." Shaykh Albani (RA) classified this hadith as being sound. However, Hafidh Ibn Hajar (RA) has a difference of opinion, and says in al-Talkhees al-Habeer: "Ibn al-Salah (RA) has said in his notes on al-Waseet that this hadith is not authentic and is unknown; and further states that the word aajin pertains to an old man rather than kneading dough. With this being said, Ibn al-Salah (RA) also maintains that "ajn" (the root from which the word "aajin" is derived) pertains to the heavy leaning on the hands (palms) for support, and not the clenching of the fists. Imam Nawawi (RA) also shares the opinion of Hafidh Ibn Hajar (RA) and is reported to have said in Sharh al-Muhaddhab that the hadith in question is weak or false, and it has no basis."

Nevertheless, the renowned hadith scholar, Bukhari reported in his book under the section titled, "Supporting oneself while getting up from prostration," that Malik bin Harith was asked about the prayer of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). He said, "**It was like the prayer of our Sheikh Amr Ibn Salama.' Ayyoob said, The**

latter used to pronounce the Takbeer perfectly when he raised up from the second prostration (of a rakah in jalsah) and would sit for a while, and then supported himself on the ground before standing up." Additionally, in Al-Fath, Al Hafiz Ibn Hajar (RA) reportedly said that the purpose of Bukhari's title, "Supporting oneself while getting up from prostration" is to highlight the action of clenching one's fists on the earth at the time of getting up from the prostration or at the time of sitting.

Lastly, Ibn Qudamah relates from Ali the hadith of Bukhari which reads: "**It is Sunnah in prayer that when one stands up during the first two rakah, that they should not clench their fists on the earth except if they are aged and cannot stand without support.**" Sheikh Albani classified this hadith as being "weak in the context for which it is being used;" because, it is contrary to the sound hadith of Al Baihaqi wherein Al-Azraq bin Qais reportedly said, "**I saw Ibn Umar performing prayer, when he got up from the second rakah he put his hand on the earth and leaned on them to get up. I said to his sons and his companions, perhaps he is doing so due to his old age. They said, 'No, this is the usual way of performing prayer.**" Allah knows best!

9) After reciting takbir and calmly standing up from jalsah, one should either raise the hands up to the shoulders or not perform raful yadayn (raising the hands) in order to

enter the second qiyam position of the salat. Then again fold the arms across the body and silently recite Surah Al-Fatihah; this time beginning with "Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim." (It is not necessary to repeat the duahs recited before saying the words "Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim" of Surah Al-Fatihah as performed in the first rakah)

ONE HAS THE OPTION OF EITHER PERFORMING RAFUL YADAYN OR NOT AFTER STANDING UP FROM SUJUD

PLACE FEET SHOULDER WIDTH APART

The evidence for the practice of raising one's hands to the shoulders while saying the second takbir is the hadith collected

by Ahmad wherein Malik bin al Huwayrith (ra) reported: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) raised his hands in his salah until he brought them in line with the top of his ears, when he bowed into ruku, when he raised his head from ruku, when he fell down into sujud, and when he raised his head from sujud**." Likewise, the evidence for not performing raful yadayn (raising the hands in salat) is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Salim bin 'Abdullah narrated: "**My father said, 'Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) used to raise both his hands up to the level of his shoulders when opening the prayer; and on saying the Takbir for bowing. And on raising his head from bowing he used to do the same and then say 'Sami a-l-lahu Liman hamida, Rabbana walaka-l-hamd;' he did not do that (i.e. raising his hands) in prostrations**.'" Furthermore, the evidence for folding the arms in salat is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Sahl bin Sa'd reported: "**The people were ordered to place the right hand on the left forearm in the prayer**...'" Also, the proof for beginning the recitation with bismillah is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Ibn Abbas narrated: "**Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) commenced his salah with 'Bismillah al Rahman al Rahim' (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful)**." Lastly, the evidence for reciting Surah Al-Fathia in the second rakah of salat is the hadith collected by Imam Muslim wherein Ata narrated on the authority

of Abu Huraira who reportedly said: "**One should recite (al-Fatiha) in every (rak'ah of) prayer**...'"

10) Silently recite Surah Al-Fathia in the second rakah of the salat by starting with bismillah, and not reciting any duah such as thana (sana) or Ta`awwudh (Seeking refuge from Shaytan). Then complete the recitation by saying "ameen."

The evidence for the practice of beginning the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah by saying the Arabic words "Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim," which translates into the English language as "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful;" either audibly or silently, is a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim wherein Anas is reported to have said: "**I observed prayer along with the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) and with Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman, but I never heard any one of them reciting Bismillah al Rahman al Rahim loudly**." Likewise, the permissibility for reciting Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim audibly before commencing with the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Ibn Abbas is reported to have said: "**Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) commenced his salah with 'Bismillah al Rahman al Rahim' (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful)**." The evidence for reciting Surah Al-Fatihah in salat is the hadith Qudsi of Bukhari wherein Ubada bin As Samit narrated: Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) said, "**Whoever does**

not recite Al-Fatihah in his prayer, his prayer is invalid."

Further evidence is also found in the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: **"A prayer performed by someone who has not recited the Essence of the Quran (1) during it is deficient (and he repeated the word three times), incomplete. Someone said to Abu Hurayrah: [Even though] we are behind the imam? (2) He said: Recite it to yourself, for I have heard the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be up on him) say: Allah (mighty and sublime be He), had said: I have divided the prayer between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. When the servant says: Al-hamdu lillahi rabbi l-alamin (3), Allah (mighty and sublime be He) says: My servant has praised Me. And when he says: Ar-rahmani r-rahim (4), Allah (mighty and sublime be He) says: My servant has extolled Me, and when he says: Maliki yawmi d-din (5), Allah says: My servant has glorified Me - and on one occasion He said: My servant has submitted to My power. And when he says: Iyyaka na budu wa iyyaka nasta in (6), He says: This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. And when he says: Ihdina s-sirata l- mustaqim, siratal ladhina an amta alayhim ghayril-maghdubi alayhim wa la d-dallin (7), He says: This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for.'"**

The Arabic text reads: "**Bis-mil laa-hir rah-maa-nir ra-heem. Al-ham-du lil-laa-hi rab-bil `aa-la-meen. Ar-rah-maa nir-ra-heem. Maa-li-ki yaw-mid-deen. ee yaa-ka na `-bu-du wa ee yaa-ka nas-ta-`een. Ih di-nas si-raa-tal mus-ta-qeem Si-raa-tal la-**

zee-na an-`am-ta `a-lay-him, ghay-ril magh-doo-bi `a-lai-him wa-lad-daal-leen." This translates into English as: "In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the most merciful. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; the beneficent, the most merciful; master of the Day of Judgment; thee alone do we worship and thee alone do we beseech for help; guide us to the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors, not of those whom have earned your anger, nor of those who went astray)."

Lastly, after reciting surah Al-Fatihah, one should then say "ameen." (silently in a silent prayer and audibly in an audible prayer) The evidence for these ruling is a hadith in the collection of Tirmidhi wherein Alqama ibn Waeel narrated from his father: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) after reciting the words GHAIRIL MAGDUBI ALAIHIM WA LAD DALLIN, read AMEEN with a silent voice**." Also, in a hadith collected by Bukhari, Abu Huraira narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'When the Imam says: 'Ghair-il-Maghdubi 'Alaihim Walad-Dallin (i.e. not the path of those who earn Your Anger, nor the path of those who went astray, then you must say, 'ameen', for if one's utterance of 'ameen' coincides with that of the angels, then his past sins will be forgiven**.'" However, it is important to note that the reciting of "ameen" should be elongated. The proof for this

ruling is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Wail ibn Hujr narrated: "**Having heard the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) recite (in the salah the last verse of al-Fatihah) and say (Ameen), he prolonged his voice**."

11) At the completion of reciting Surah Al-Fatihah, pronounce the sixth takbir, raising both hands up to the shoulders and proceed to the ruku phase of the second rakah.

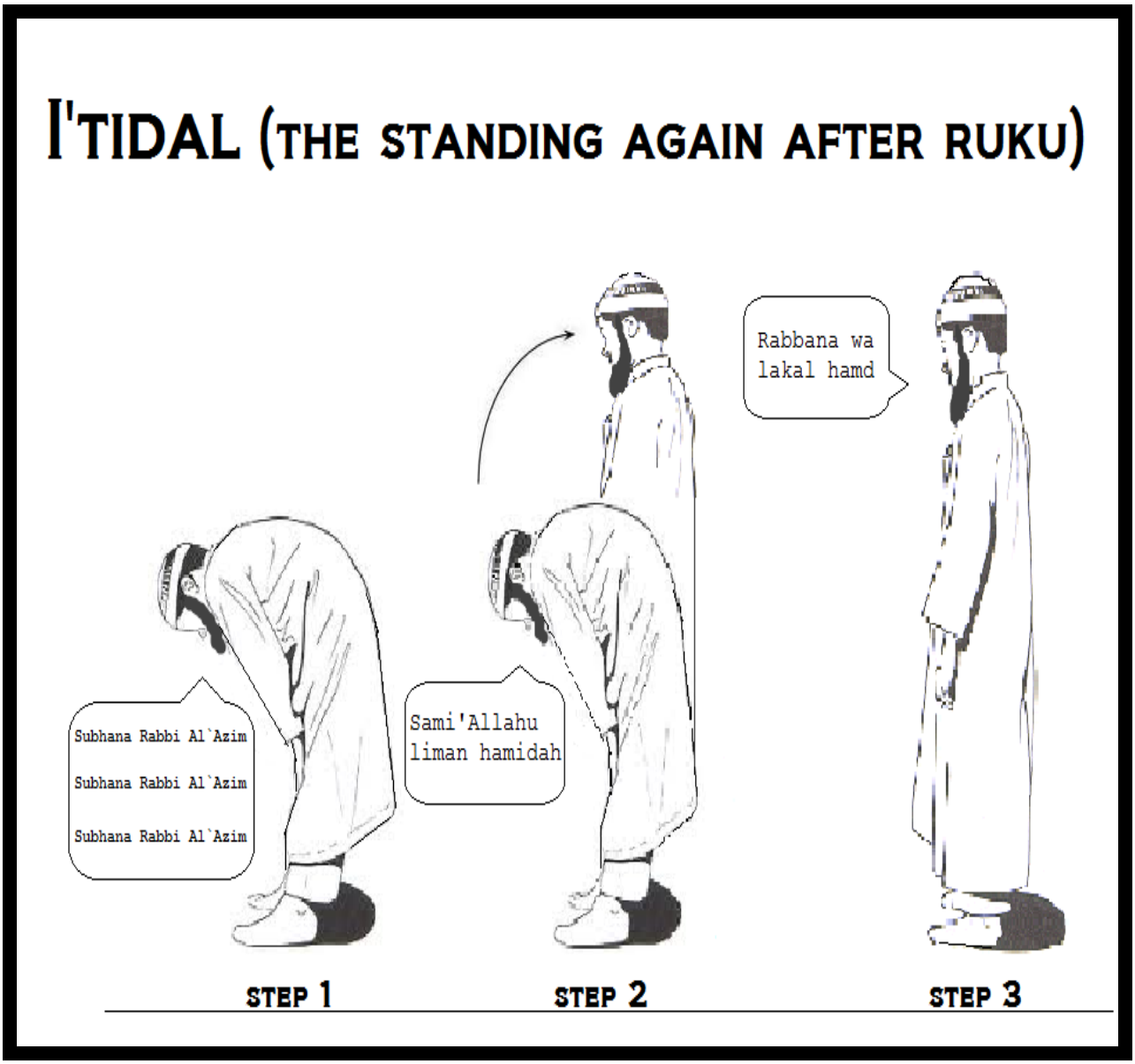
RUKU (BOWING)

AFTER SAYING THE TAKBIR AT THE END OF THE QIYAM POSITION, PROCEED TO THE RUKU POSITION BY BENDING OVER IN A 90 DEGREE ANGLE AND PLACE THE PALM OF THE RIGHT HAND OVER THE RIGHT KNEE AND THE PALM OF THE LEFT HAND OVER THE LEFT KNEE

While in ruku with the palms of both hands resting on top of the knees say, سبحان ربي العظيم - Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim (glory to my lord the great) three times.

The evidence for the specific details of the ruku position of salat is found in the hadith of Ahmad wherein Malik bin al Huwayrith is reported to have said: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) raised his hands in salah until he brought them in line with the top of his ears when he bowed into ruku...."** In addition, the hadith of Bukhari narrated by Abu Humayd As-Saa'idi reports: **"When the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) made Ruku', he would firmly put his hands on his knees while making his back straight (with respect to his hips)."** Lastlt, a hadith collected by Ibn Majah that was narrated by Ibn Masud reports: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'When anyone of you bows (ruku), let him say in his bowing: 'Subhana Rabbiyal-Azim (Glory is to my Lord, the Most Great)' three times; if he does that his bowing will be complete..."**

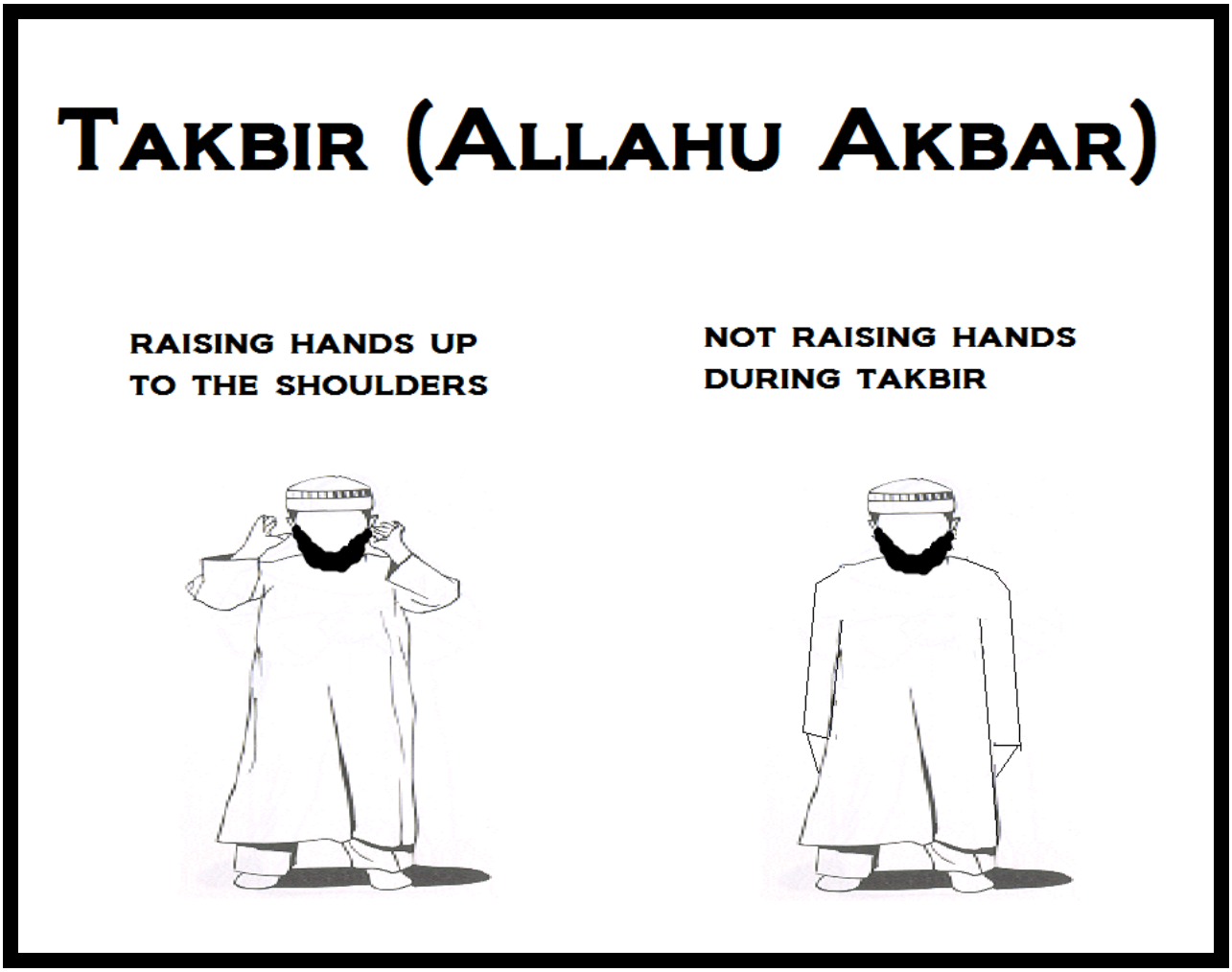
12) After reciting Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim (glory to my lord the great) three times, rise up from ruku saying sami Allahu liman hamidah (Allah hears those who praise him); then once standing fully erect in qawma say, Rabbana wa lakal hamd (Our Lord, all praise is for you), and establish i'tidal.



The evidence for reciting Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim (glory to my lord the great) three times while in the ruku position of the salat is a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim wherein Hudhayfah narrated: "**I prayed with the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.).....; He (P.B.U.H.) would bow (in ruku) and say:** سبحان ربي العظيم **'Glory be to my Mighty Lord' (Subhanah Rabbi-al-Azim)...**"

Furthermore, the evidence for what should be recited after saying Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim (glory to my lord the great) three times is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Huraira who was reported to have said: "**When the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, سمع الله لمن حمده 'Sami' a-l-lahu Liman hamida,'(Allah heard those who praises Him), he would say, ربنا ولك الحمد 'rabbana wa-laka-l-hamd.'(upon rising up to a standing position in ruku) ...**" Lastly, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari serves as evidence for the manner of performing the ruku portion of the salat. The hadith in question that was narrated by Abu Hurayra reports as follows: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) entered the mosque and a man entered and prayed. He came and greeted the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) who returned the greeting and said, 'Go back and pray. You have not prayed.' He (the man) prayed and came and greeted the Prophet P.B.U.H.) a second time, who again said three times, 'Go back and pray for you have not prayed.' He (the man) said, 'By the One who sent you with the truth, I cannot do any better than that, so teach me.' He (P.B.U.H.)said, 'When you stand for the prayer, say the takbir and then recite something you know well from the Qur'an and then do ruku' until you are at rest in your ruku. Then stand back up until you are completely upright..... Do that throughout all of your prayer.'"**

13) Pronounce the seventh takbir (Allahu Akbar) after standing fully erect from ruku, (either raising the hands to the shoulders or not).



The evidence for this practice is found in a hadith collected by Bukhari which reports as follows: **"Abu Qilaba saw Malik ibn al-Huwayrith praying - he said the takbir and raised his hands. When he went to do ruku he raised his hands. When he raised his head from ruku (to stand upright), he raised his hands. He related that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) had done the same as that."**

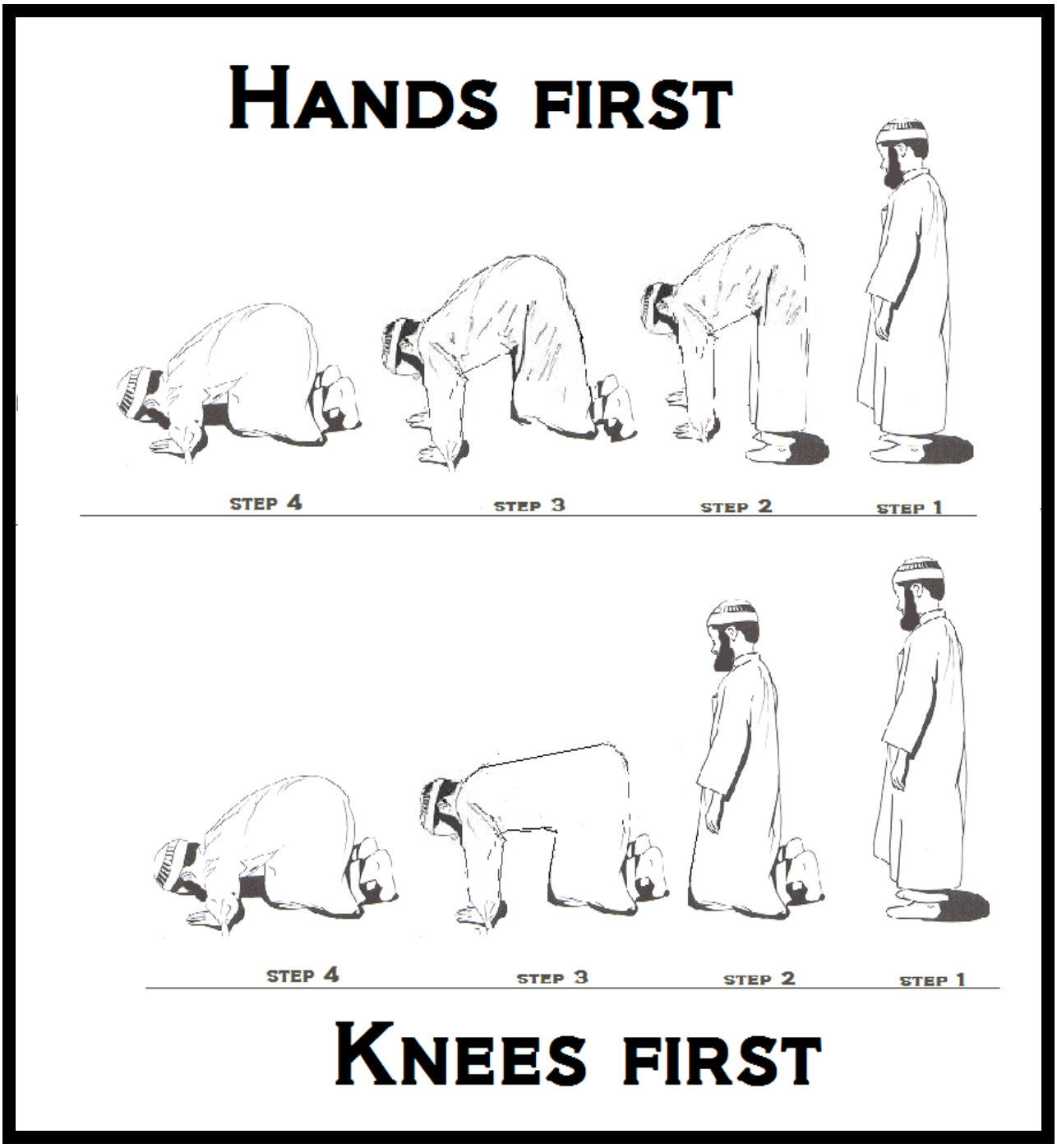
RAFUL YADAYN

(RAISING HANDS IN SALAT)

Likewise, the evidence for not raising the hands is another hadith of Bukhari wherein Abu Humaid narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) came up (from ruku) and stood straight until every vertebra (of his Spinal Column) came back to its (natural) place**." Thus, implying that in order to fully straighten the spine upon rising from ruku, the entire body should be returned to its natural standing position; which involves the arms hanging down versus being folded; i.e., justifying why the arms and hands are hanging down in the first place.

NOT RAISING THE HANDS AFTER STANDING STRAIGHT FROM RUKU

14) Then proceed to the sujud position a third time by either placing the palms of the hands on the ground before the knees or simply place the knees on the ground before touching with the hands.

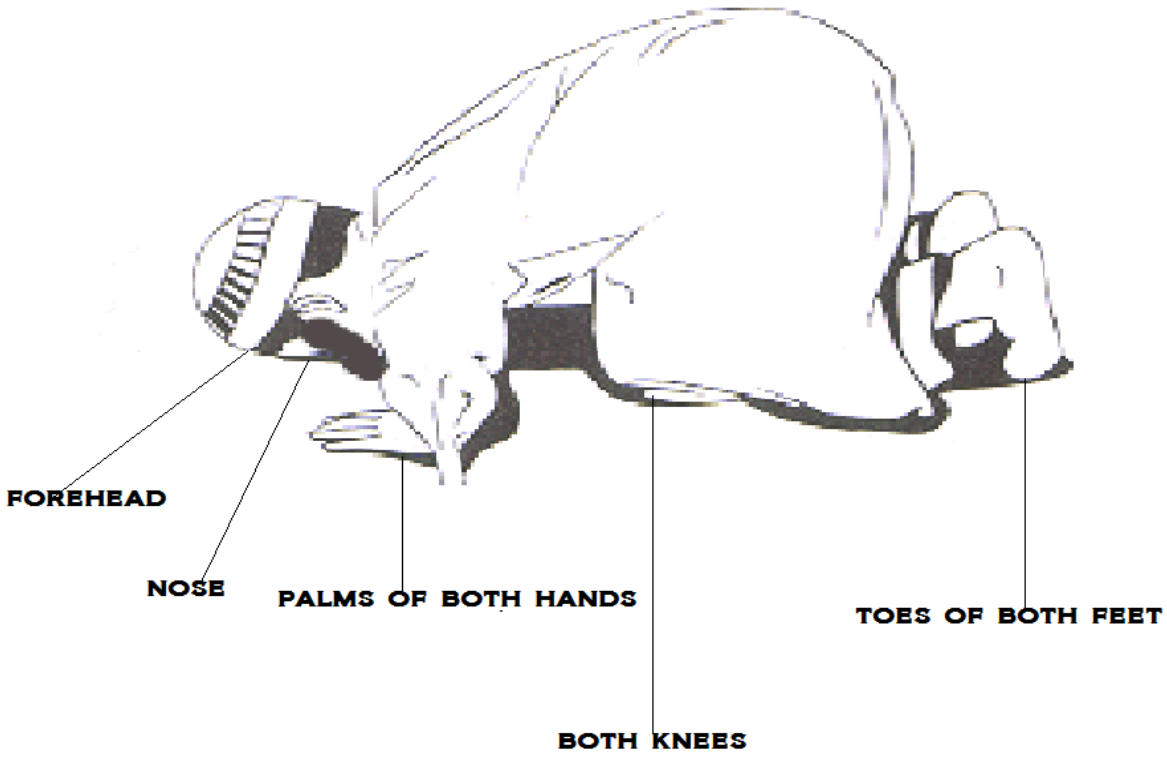


The evidence for entering sujud with the knees coming into contact with the ground before the hands is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Waa'il ibn Hajar is reported to have said: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), when he did sujud placing his knees down (on the ground) before his hands, and when he got up he raised his hands before his knees**." This is the position accepted by the Hanafi, Shafi'i and Hanbali Madhabs. However, the Maliki Madhab prefers prostrating with the hands touching the ground before the knees. The evidence supporting the Maliki Madhab's position is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Huraira is reported to have said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'When one of you prostrates, he should not kneel as the animal kneels; instead, he should place his hands down before his knees**.'"

15) Once in the first sujud of the second rakah, align the fingers and toes towards the Qiblah, positioning the palms away from the head and body (level with the shoulders or level with the ears), as with the position for doing pushup. The fingers of the hands should also be close together and not separated. The nose and forehead should also be placed on the ground in order to establish seven points of the contact in sujud; i.e., the forehead and nose, both hands, both knees, and the tips of the toes of both feet should establish contact with the ground.

SUJUD (SAJDA)

7 POINTS OF CONTACT



After establishing seven points of contact with the ground, become completely at ease/relaxed while in sujud (keeping the eyes open) and say, "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la" (Glorified is my Lord, the highest/supreme) three times. (Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la can be repeated more than three times, so long as it is done in odd number units such as 3, 5, 7, etc.)

The evidence for the ruling of prostrating on seven bones or points of contact is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abbas narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) was ordered (by Allah) to prostrate on seven parts .... Those parts are: the forehead (along with the tip of nose), both hands, both knees, and the (toes of) both feet**." Moreover, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Amr bin Ata reports: "**I was sitting with some of the companions of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) and we were discussing about the way of praying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Abu Humaid As-Saidi said, 'I remember the prayer of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) better than any one of you.... In prostrations, he placed both his hands on the ground with the forearms away from the ground and away from his body, and his toes were facing the Qibla...**'" Regarding the manner of prostrating is the ahadith of Abu Dawud and Ibn Khuzaimah wherein it is reported: "**(In sujud), He (P.B.U.H.) would support himself on his palms [and spread them]',and 'put his fingers together**.'" Furthermore, the evidence for suplicating while in sujud is a hadith collected by Imam Muslim narrated by Abu Huraira reports: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication (in this state).**'" Lastly, a hadith collected by Abu Dawud reports, supplicate in sujud by saying: "**Glory is to my Lord, the Most High.**"

16) Raise up from prostrating (sajdah) saying "Allahu Akbar" an eighth time, into a fully relaxed sitting position (jalsah).

JALSAH POSITION

RAISE UP FROM PROSTRATING (SAJDAH) SAYING "ALLAHU AKBAR" INTO A FULLY RELAXED SITTING POSITION (JALSAH) WITH THE PALMS OF THE HANDS RESTING ON THE THIGHS AND KNEES

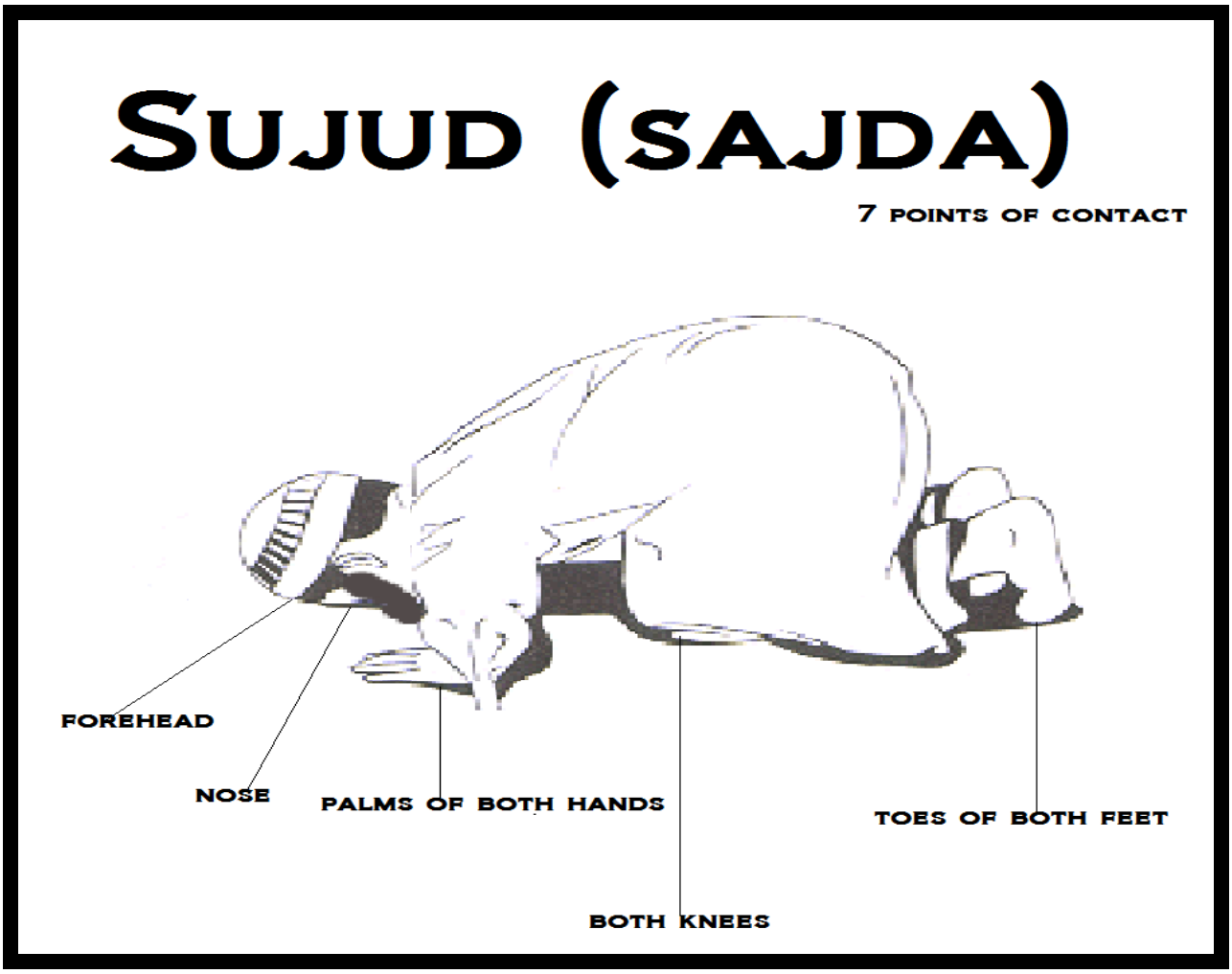
THE BACK SHOULD ALSO BE MADE STRAIGHT (FULLY ERECT)

BEND THE LEFT FOOT AND SITTING ON IT (INSIDE ANKLE), WHILE KEEPING THE RIGHT FOOT PROPPED UP (HEEL IN THE AIR AND THE TOES ON THE GROUND POINTING FORWARD TOWARDS THE QIBLAH).

While in jalsah, the palms of the hands should be positioned on the thighs and knees (the right palm on the right thigh and knee and the left palm on the left thigh and knee), while simultaneously bending the left foot and sitting on it (inside ankle), while keeping the right foot propped up (heel in the air and the toes on the ground pointing forward towards the Qiblah). The back and head should also be made straight (eyes positioned on the place of prostration).

The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ikrima reported: "..... **He (P.B.U.H.) used to say Takbir on prostrating and on raising his head from prostration**....." What is more, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Huraira reports: "..... **prostrate calmly till you feel at ease and then raise (your head) and sit with Calmness till you feel at ease and then prostrate with calmness till you feel at ease in prostration and do the same (raise the head) in the whole of your prayer**." Furthermore, a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that was narrated by Abdullah bin Zubayr reports: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) sat in prayer, he placed the left foot between his thigh and calf and stretched the right foot and placed his left hand on his left thigh and his right hand on his right thigh**." Lastly, a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn 'Ata' reports that Abu Humayd al-Saa'idi said: "..... **Then he (P.B.U.H.) would tuck his foot under his body and sit on it. Then he (P.B.U.H.) sat upright (in jalsah) until every bone returned to its place**.'"

17) Calmly pronounce the ninth takbir (Allahu Akbar) while in jalsah to initiate the second sajdah of the second rakah. As with all prostrations, care should be taken to ensure that seven points of contact are established with the ground.



Once seven points of contact are established with the ground during sajdah, calmly say, "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la (Glorified is my Lord, the highest/supreme) three or more times in odd number units.

The evidence for the ruling of prostrating on seven bones or points of contact is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abbas narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) was ordered (by Allah) to prostrate on seven parts .... Those parts are: the forehead (along with the tip of nose), both hands, both knees,**

and the (toes of) both feet." Moreover, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Amr bin Ata reports: "**I was sitting with some of the companions of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) and we were discussing about the way of praying of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Abu Humaid As-Saidi said, 'I remember the prayer of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) better than any one of you.... In prostrations, he placed both his hands on the ground with the forearms away from the ground and away from his body, and his toes were facing the Qibla**...'" Regarding the manner of prostrating is the ahadith of Abu Dawud and Ibn Khuzaimah wherein it is reported: "**(In sujud), He (P.B.U.H.) would support himself on his palms [and spread them]',and 'put his fingers together**.'" Furthermore, the evidence for suplicating while in sujud is a hadith collected by Imam Muslim narrated by Abu Huraira reports: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication (in this state).**'" Lastly, a hadith collected by Abu Dawud reports, supplicate in sujud by saying: "**Glory is to my Lord, the Most High**."

18) After calmly saying, "Subhana Rabbiy al-A`la (Glorified is my Lord, the highest/supreme) three times, once again, raise up from prostrating in sujud into a fully relaxed sitting (jalsah) position.

Jalsah position

Raise up from prostrating (sajdah) saying "Allahu Akbar" into a fully relaxed sitting position (jalsah) with the palms of the hands resting on the thighs and knees

The back should also be made straight (fully erect)

Bend the left foot and sitting on it (inside ankle), while keeping the right foot propped up (heel in the air and the toes on the ground pointing forward towards the Qiblah).

While in the second jalsah of the second rakah of salatul istikhara, again place the palms of the hands on top of the thighs and knees, while simultaneously bending the left foot and sitting on it (inside ankle), while keeping the right foot propped up (heel in the air and the toes on the ground pointing forward towards the Qiblah). Then pronounce the tenth takbir (Allahu Akbar), with the back and head being made straight, while the eyes remain fixed on the place of prostration.

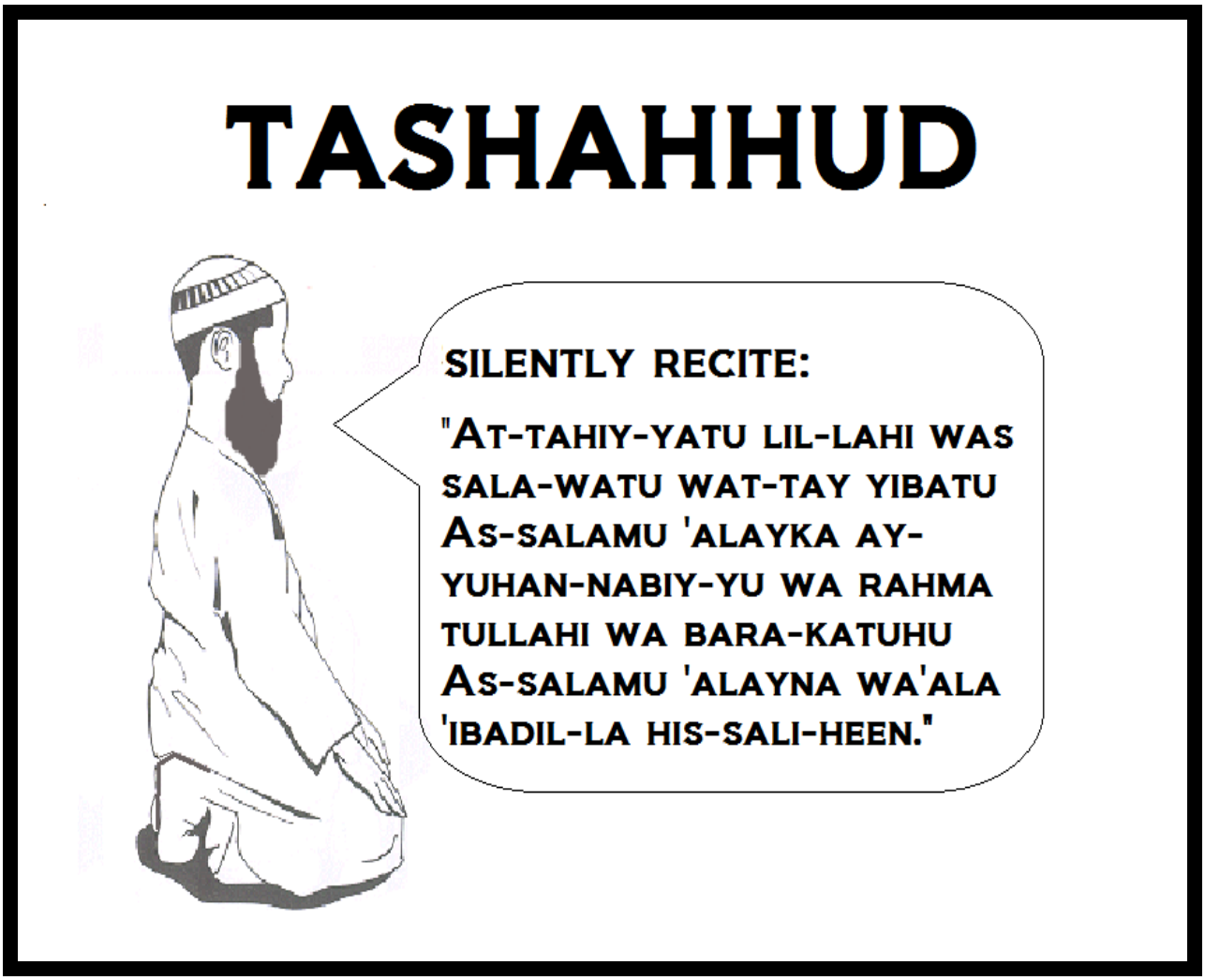
The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ikrima reported: "**..... He (P.B.U.H.) used to say Takbir on prostrating and on raising his head from prostration**....." What is more, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Huraira reports: "**..... prostrate calmly till you feel at ease and then raise (your head) and sit with Calmness till you feel at ease and then prostrate with calmness till you feel at ease in prostration and do the same (raise the head) in the whole of your prayer**." Furthermore, a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that was narrated by Abdullah bin Zubayr reports: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) sat in prayer, he placed the left foot between his thigh and calf and stretched the right foot and placed his left hand on his left thigh and his right hand on his right thigh**." Lastly, a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn 'Ata' reports that Abu Humayd al-Saa'idi said: "**..... Then he (P.B.U.H.) would tuck his foot under his body and sit on it. Then he (P.B.U.H.) sat upright (in jalsah) until every bone returned to its place**.'"

19) After performing the second and final jalsah of the second rakah of salatul istikhara, one should then sit calmly in the Qad'ah position (sitting position of the second rakah) and sit on the inside of the left ankle while propping up

the right foot with the heel in the air and the toes facing the qiblah.

The evidence for this practice is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Muhammad bin 'Amr bin 'Ata' narrated that Abu Humaid As-Saidi reportedly said: "**I remember the prayer of Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) better than any one of you. ... On sitting in the second Rak'a he sat on his left foot and propped up the right one; and in the last Rak'a he pushed his left foot forward and kept the other foot propped up and sat over the buttocks.**"

20) While calmly sitting in the Qad'ah position, silently recite the tashahhud.


TASHAHHUD
SILENTLY RECITE:
"AT-TAHIY-YATU LIL-LAHI WAS SALA-WATU WAT-TAY YIBATU AS-SALAMU 'ALAYKA AY-YUHAN-NABIY-YU WA RAHMA TULLAHI WA BARA-KATUHU AS-SALAMU 'ALAYNA WA'ALA 'IBADIL-LA HIS-SALI-HEEN."

The evidence for this practice is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud reported: "**It pertains to the sunnah to utter the tashahhud quietly**."

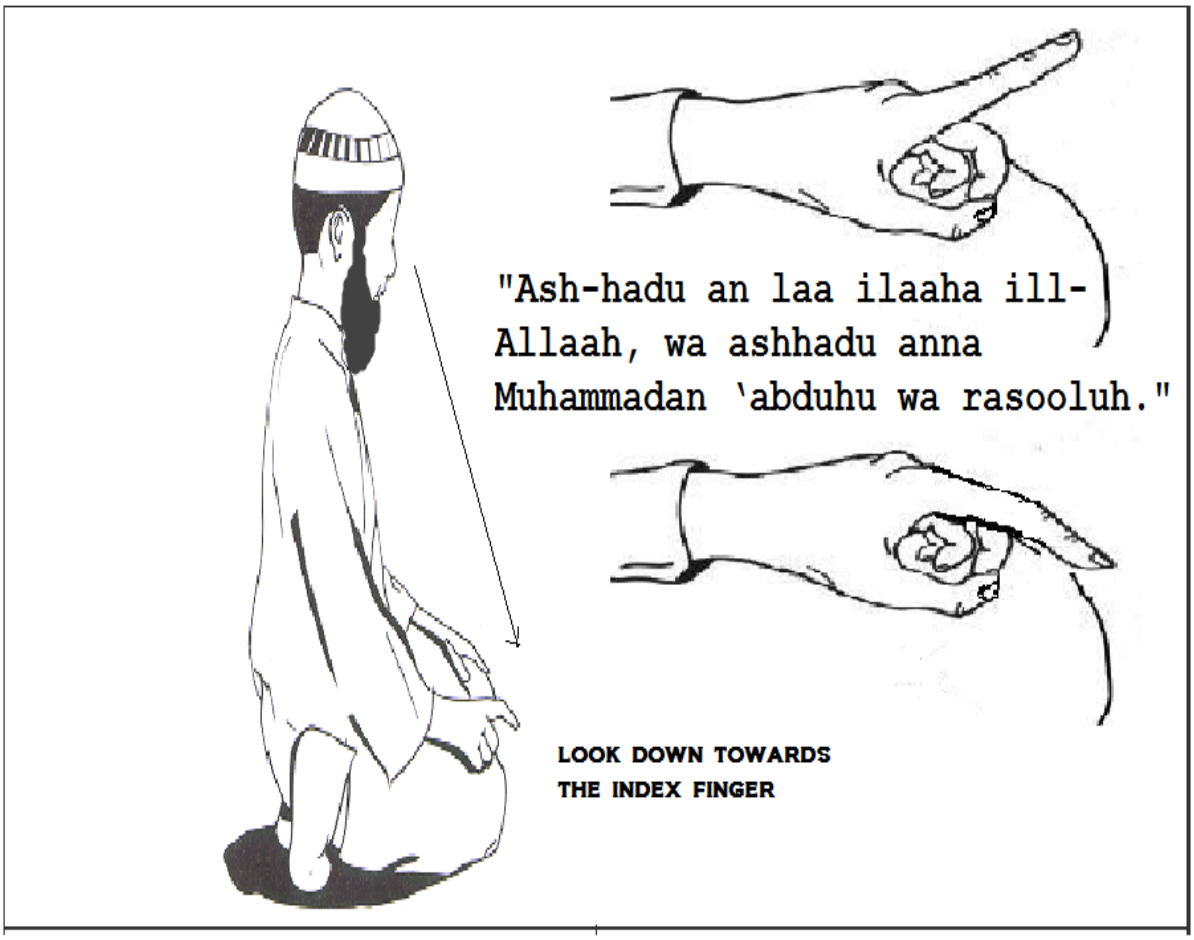
21) The tashahhud is performed by silently saying: **"At-tahiy-yatu lil-lahi was sala-watu wat-tay yibatu As-salamu 'alayka ay-yuhan-nabiy-yu wa rahma tullahi wa bara-katuhu As-salamu**

'alayna wa'ala 'ibadil-la his-sali-heen Ash hadu al-la ilaha il-lal lahu wa ash hadu an-na Muhammadan 'ab-duhu wa rasuluh; which translates into English as "All worships are for Allah. Allah's peace be upon you, O Prophet, and His mercy and blessings. Peace be on us and on all righteous servants of Allah. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger."

The evidence for this practice is a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Abdullah narrated: **"When we prayed with the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) we used to say: 'As-Salam be on Allah from His worshipers, As-Salam be on Gabriel, As-Salam be on Michael, As-Salam be on so-and-so. 'When the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) finished his prayer, he faced us and said, 'Allah Himself is As-Salam (Peace), so when one sits in the prayer, one should say: 'At-Tahiyatu-li llahi Was-Salawatu, Wat-Taiyibatu, As-Salamu'Alaika aiyuhan-Nabiyyu wa Rah-matul-lahi wa Barakatuhu, As-Salamu'Alaina wa'ala'Ibadillahi assalihin, for if he says so, then it will be for all the pious slave of Allah in the Heavens and the Earth. (Then he should say),'Ash-hadu an la ilaha illalllahu wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan'Abduhu wa rasulu-hu,'and then he can choose whatever speech (invocation) he wishes.'"**

22) While reciting the tashahhud, stop after saying "ibadil-la his-sali-heen;" and with the palm of the right hand positioned on the right thigh and knee, raise the index finger in a pointing manner while making a circle with the thumb and middle finger (connect the tip of the middle finger with the tip of the thumb); and say, **"Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan ʻabduhu wa rasooluh."** Then lower the index finger after saying this.

POINT THE INDEX FINGER OF THE RIGHT HAND DURING THE TASHAHHUD WHEN "ASH HADU AL-LA ILAHA IL-LAL LAHU" IS RECITED.



The evidence for the manner in which the hands are to be position on the thighs/knees and how the fingers should be

positioned in certain phases of the tashahhud is the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein 'Abdullah b. Zubair reportedly said: **"When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) sat for supplication, (i.e., in the tashahhud position of salat), he placed his right hand on his right thigh and his left hand on his left thigh, and pointed with his forefinger (index finger), and placed his thumb on his (milddle) finger (tip of thumb connected to the tip of the middle finger), and covered his knee with the palm of his left hand."** Furthermore, the evidence for what should be recited while sitting in the tashahhud position of salat and when to actually raise the index finger is the hadith collected by Ibn Majah that was narrated by Abdullah ibn Idris al-Awdi who reportedly said: **"He had joined his thumb and middle finger to make a ring, and raised the finger between them to make duah (supplication) in the declaration of faith (of the tashahhud; i.e., "Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan ʿabduhu wa rasooluh")."**

It is also worth mentioning that the scholars have not reached a consensus regarding the ideal manner of moving the index finger of the right hand during the tashahhud. Some maintain that the index finger should only be moved to engage in a pointing position; while others are of the belief that the finger should be moved vigorously. There is evidence from the

ahadith to support both positions; therefore, one will not be sinful for utilizing the method which suits their reasoning.

The evidence for moving the finger is a hadith narrated by Abu Dawud wherein Wa'il bin Hujr allegedly said: "**...then he closed his fingers and made a ring, then he raised his finger and I saw him moving it and making duaa with it, then I came in a time and when it was cold and so I saw the people with cloaks upon them moving their hands beneath their clothes due to the cold.**" Likewise, the evidence for pointing the index finger and not moving it is another hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Ibn az-Zubair was reported to have said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) would point with his (index) finger while supplicating, and he would not move it.**" With this being said, it is also important to note that according to Shaykh Adh-Dhabee, "As for the hadith of Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubair which mentioned that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to point with his finger when he made duah and not move it, has an unauthentic isnad due to the fact that it contains Muhammad Ibn 'Ajalah, who is of average memory." Adh-Dhabee further claims that, "Any additional ahadith by Muhammad Ibn 'Ajalah are not acceptable if they contradict anyone who is more reliable than him. Muhammad Ibn 'Ajalah narration becomes shaadh (an unreliable uncharacteristic against the norm); and as a result, Muslim does not report from him except to endorse

something. Therefore, even if the hadith of Abdullah ibn az-Zubair was established, it is a denial and the hadith which Waail ibn Hujr is affirming. Thus, in this instance, that which affirms is given precedence over that which denies, since the one who affirms has an increase in knowledge."

Contrary to the above mentioned position of Shaykh Adh-Dhabee, Al-Bayhaqi maintains that even if one were to assume that the narration of Wa'il bin Hujr which mentions moving the finger is authentic, the movement here would mean pointing and not repetitive movement (in order to make it conform with the previously mentioned rigorously-authenticated narration). Imam Nawawi agrees in the Majmu' (3.454) with the conclusion of Al-Bayhaqi.

It is also important to note that according to Imam Nawawi, the hadith narrated by Ibn Umar which reports that he heard from the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) that "**moving of the finger during prayer terrifies the Devil**," is not authentic. Imam Nawawi also adds a citation from Al-Bayhaqi wherein he reportedly said, "Al-Waqidi was alone in narrating this, and it is weak.'"

Shaikh Muqbil is also reported to have said, "The hadith of Wa'il bin Hujr is Hasan (good). It proves pointing with the finger. However, in reference to moving it, then the only one who narrated that act was Zaa'idah bin Qudaamah and he has

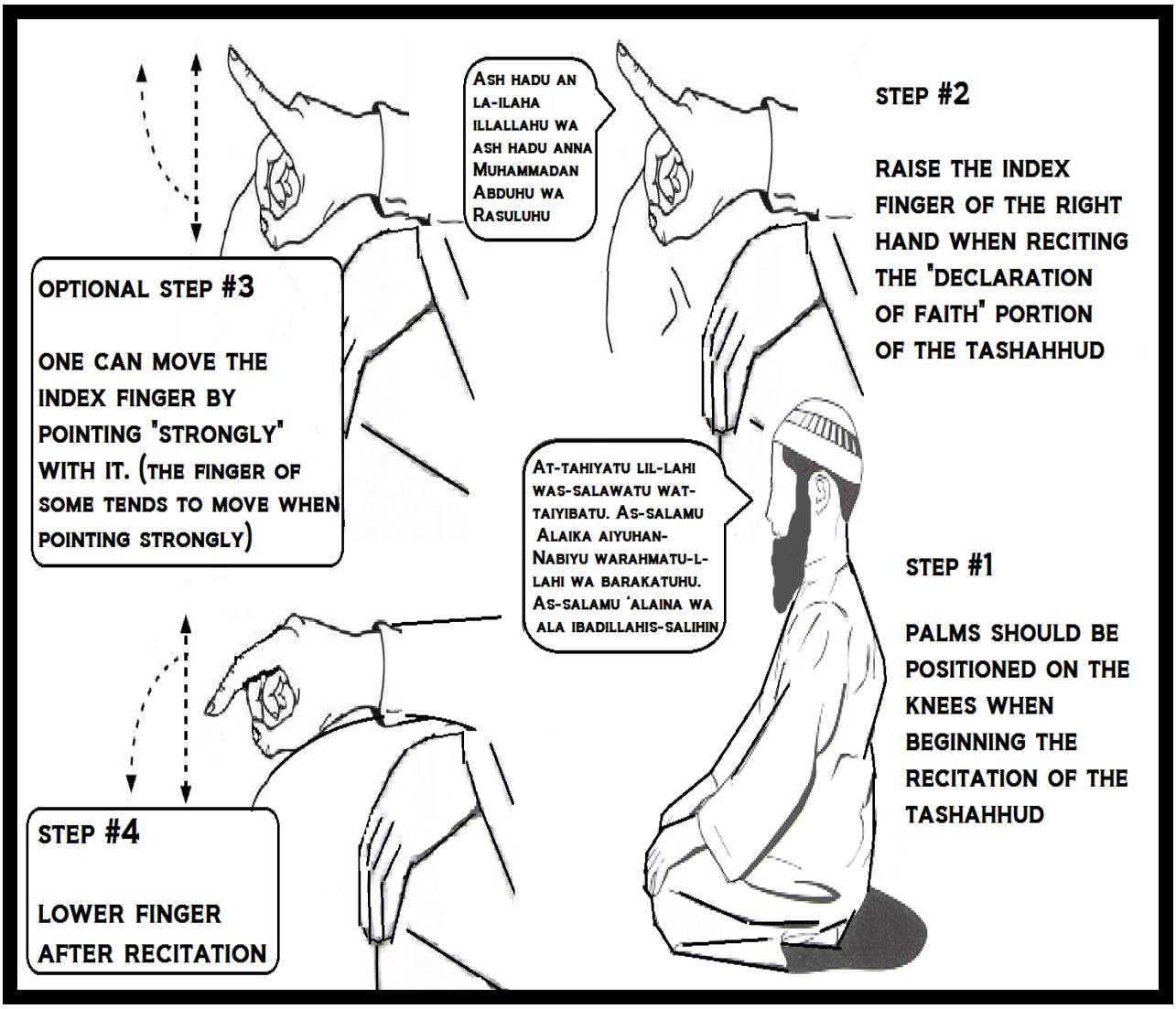
contradicted 13 narrators (who all narrated this same hadeeth from Waa'il); namely, Bishr bin Al-Mufadhdhal with Abu Dawud, Sufyaan bin 'Uyainah with An-Nasaa'ee, Ath-Thawree with An-Nasaa'ee, 'Abdul-Waahid bin Ziyaad with Ahmad, Shu'bah with Ahmad, Zuhayr bin Mu'aawiyah with Ahmad, 'Abdullaah bin Idrees with Ibn Khuzaymah, Khaalid bin 'Abdillaah At-Tahhaan with Al-Bayhaqee, Muhammad bin Fudhayl with Ibn Khuzaymah, Abul-Ahwas Sallaam bin Sulaym with At-Tayaalisee, Aboo 'Awaanah and Gheelaan bin Jaami' who were both quoted by Al-Bayhaqee as mentioning it (i.e. this hadith without moving the finger), and all of them reported it from 'Aasim bin Kulayb (who narrated it from his father, from Waa'il) and none of them mentioned moving (the finger) in it." Shaikh Muqbil further stated, "It was also reported from the narrations of the companions 'Abdullaah bin Az-Zubayr, 'Abdullaah bin 'Umar, Aboo Humayd As-Saa'idee, Aboo Hurayrah, Sa'd bin Abee Waqqaas, Ibn 'Abbaas, and Khaffaaf bin Eemaa', no mentioning of moving (the finger)." In conclusion, Shaikh Muqbil adopted the basic principle that a Ziyaadah (extra added wording) which contradicts what others who were more reliable or more numerous in their number reported is Shaaththh, and thus unaccepted; however, Shaikh Al-Albaanee considered this a case of Ziyaadatuth-Thiqah (the additional information added in a narration of one of the narrators who is reliable that is not found in the other versions of the hadith); because, Al-

Albaanee did not consider the additional wording, "and he would move it" as contradictory because he says that pointing does not cancel out movement. Shaykh Albani also maintained that the hadith of Wa'il bin Hujr is a clear proof for the pointing and moving of the index-finger, and said: "This hadeeth gives the benefit of tahreek (continuous movement); this is the Madhab of the Malikis and this is upon Haqq (truth)."

The methods of pointing the index finger in tashahhud according to the four Madhabs:

- **The Hanafis** say that the finger should be raised when saying "Laa ilaaha ill-Allah (There is no god except Allah)" and it should be lowered when saying, "ill-Allah (except Allah)."
- **The Shafiis** say that it should be raised when saying "ill-Allah."
- According to **the Malikis**, as well as the later Hanafi scholars, the index finger should be pointed throughout the duration of the tashahhud.
- **The Hanbalis** say that one should point with the finger when saying the name of Allah, without moving it.

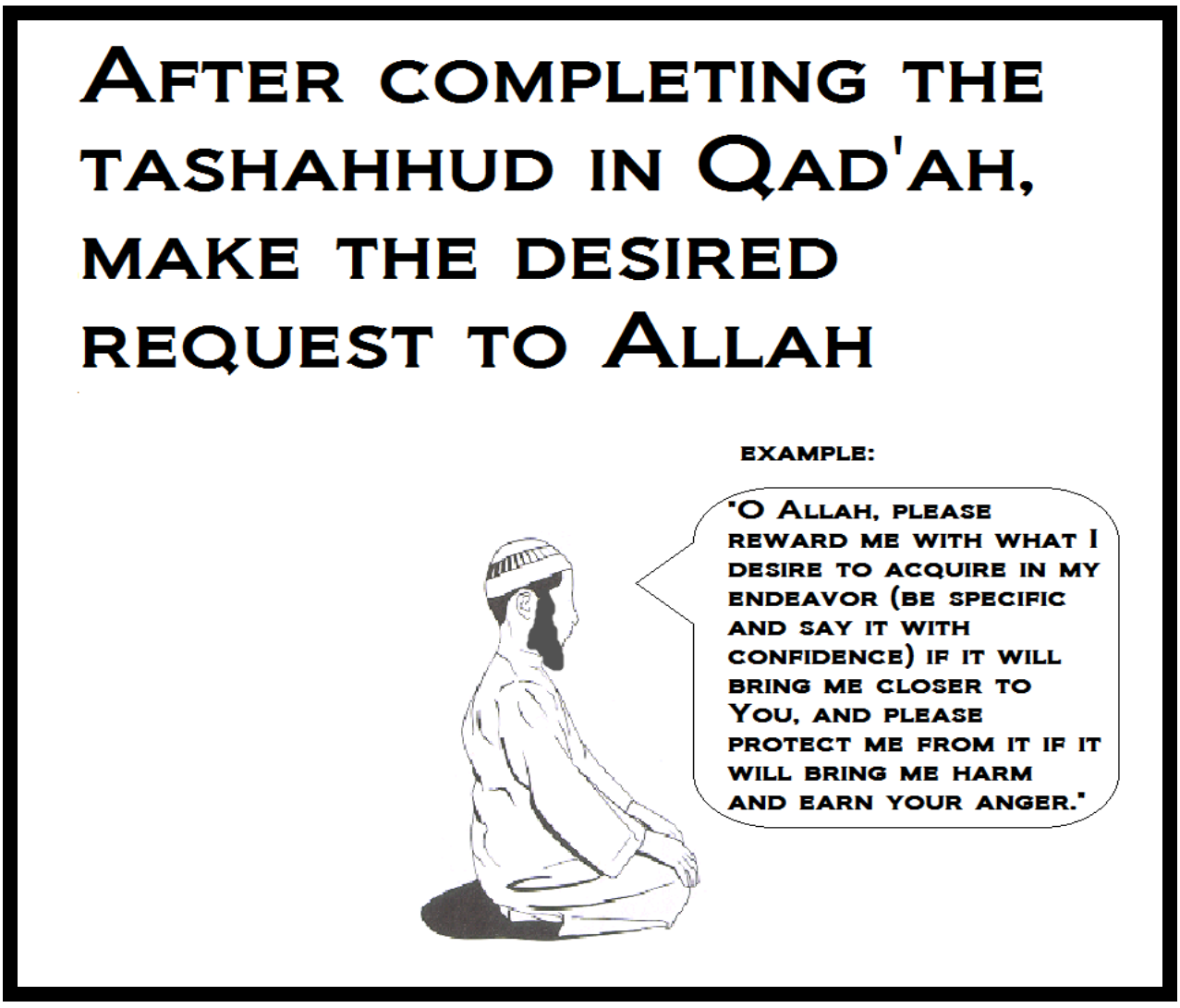
The method of pointing the index finger in tashahhud based on the statements of ahadith:


ASH HADU AN LA-ILAHA ILLALLAHU WA ASH HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN ABDUHU WA RASULUHU
STEP #2
RAISE THE INDEX FINGER OF THE RIGHT HAND WHEN RECITING THE 'DECLARATION OF FAITH' PORTION OF THE TASHAHHUD
OPTIONAL STEP #3
ONE CAN MOVE THE INDEX FINGER BY POINTING 'STRONGLY' WITH IT. (THE FINGER OF SOME TENDS TO MOVE WHEN POINTING STRONGLY)
AT-TAHIYATU LIL-LAHI WAS-SALAWATU WAT-TAIYIBATU. AS-SALAMU ALAIKA AIYUHAN-NABIYU WARAHMATU-L-LAHI WA BARAKATUHU. AS-SALAMU 'ALAINA WA ALA IBADILLAHIS-SALIHIN
STEP #1
PALMS SHOULD BE POSITIONED ON THE KNEES WHEN BEGINNING THE RECITATION OF THE TASHAHHUD
STEP #4
LOWER FINGER AFTER RECITATION

The evidence for the above method of what should be recited while sitting in the tashahhud position of salat and when to actually raise the index finger is the hadith collected by Ibn Majah that was narrated by Abdullah ibn Idris al-Awdi who was reported to have said: **"He had joined his thumb and middle**

finger to make a ring, and raised the finger between them to make duah (supplication) in the declaration of faith (of the tashahhud; i.e., "Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluh")."

23) After completing the tashahhud in Qad'ah, make the desired request to Allah to either reward you with what you desire to acquire in your endeavor if it will bring you closer to him or to protect you from it if it will bring you harm.


AFTER COMPLETING THE TASHAHHUD IN QAD'AH, MAKE THE DESIRED REQUEST TO ALLAH
EXAMPLE:
"O ALLAH, PLEASE REWARD ME WITH WHAT I DESIRE TO ACQUIRE IN MY ENDEAVOR (BE SPECIFIC AND SAY IT WITH CONFIDENCE) IF IT WILL BRING ME CLOSER TO YOU, AND PLEASE PROTECT ME FROM IT IF IT WILL BRING ME HARM AND EARN YOUR ANGER."

The evidence for this practice is a hadith collected by Imam Muslim wherein Abu Huraira reported: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication (in this state)**.'" Further evidence for this practice is found in a hadith collected in the Muwatta of Imam Malik, wherein Yahya related from Malik from Nafi that Abdullah ibn Umar used to say the tashahhud saying: "**In the name of Allah. Greetings belong to Allah. Prayers belong to Allah. Pure actions belong to Allah. Peace be on the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Peace be on us and on the slaves of Allah who are salihun. I testify that there is no god except Allah. I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. He used to say this after the first two rakas and he would make supplication with whatever seemed fit to him when the tashahhud was completed**." Lastly, the hadith of Imam Muslim that was narrated by Ibn Mas'ud reports: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) taught him the tashahud and then said, 'Then choose whatever you wish to ask (of Allah)**.'" Therefore, since the prayer of Istikharah is being performed, the following duah should be recited: "O Allah! I consult You, for You have all knowledge, and appeal to You to support me with Your Power and I ask for Your Bounty, for You are able to do all things while I am not, and You are all-knowing while I am not; and You are the Knower of the Unseen. O

Allah! If You ordain for this matter (name your matter) to be good for me both at present and in my future, (or in my religion), in my life and in the Hereafter, then reward me with it and make it easy for me, and bestow Your blessings on me in that matter. O Allah! likewise, if You ordain that this matter is not beneficial for me in my religion, in my life and the Hereafter (or at present or in the future), then divert me from it and choose for me what is good wherever it may be, and make me be pleased with it." The evidence for this directive is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Jabir bin Abdullah reportedly said: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to teach us the way of doing Istikhara (Istikhara means to ask Allah to guide one to the right sort of action concerning any job or a deed), in all matters as he taught us the Suras of the Quran. He said, 'If anyone of you thinks of doing any job he should offer a two Rakat prayer other than the compulsory ones and say (after the prayer): -- 'Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi'ilmika, Wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, Wa as'alaka min fadlika al-'azlm Fa-innaka taqdiru Wala aqdiru, Wa ta'lamu Wala a'lamu, Wa anta 'allamu l-ghuyub. Allahumma, in kunta ta'lam anna hadha-l-amra Khairun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'aqibati amri (or 'ajili amri wa'ajilihi) Faqdirhu wa yas-sirhu li thumma barik li Fihi, Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha-lamra shar-run li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'aqibati amri (or fi'ajili amri wa ajilihi) Fasrifhu anni was-**

rifni anhu. Waqdir li al-khaira haithu kana Thumma ardini bihi.' (O Allah! I ask guidance from Your knowledge, And Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that this job is good for my religion and my subsistence and in my Hereafter--(or said: If it is better for my present and later needs)--Then please ordain it for me and make it easy for me to get, And then bless me in it, and if You know that this job is harmful to me in my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter--(or said: If it is worse for my present and later needs)--Then keep it away from me and let me be away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me, and make me satisfied with it). The Prophet added that then the person should name (mention) his need."

Special note:

Do not raise the hands in an attempt to make duah to Allah because doing so in salat is an innovation that is not supported by the Quran or any ahadith. In fact, when the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) raised his hands in duah, he did so in a manner that exposed his armpits; which is the total opposite of those who cup their hands in duah after completing the tashahhud. Nevertheless, this method of duah is not to be performed while in salat; it is mainly performed in special

invocations such as after performing the Witr prayer, praying for rain, and invoking Allah against enemies.

The evidence for not raising the hands in duah either during or after the tashahhud is the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Ali reportedly said: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) prayed, the last thing he would say between the tashahud and the tasleem was, 'O Allah, forgive my past and later sins, what was in private and what was in public, and what I have been extravagant in. You are more knowledgeable of it than I. You are the Promoter and the Retarder. There is no god except You.**'"

Therefore, after invoking Allah before the tasleem, it would be impractical to repeat the invocation afterwards by raising the hands; especially, since there is no hadith to support doing so. Furthermore, additional evidence for the impermissibility of raising the hands before or after the tasleem is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Anas Bin Malik is reported to have said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) never raised his hands for any invocation except for that of Istisqa' (invocation for rain) and he used to raise them so much that the whiteness of his armpits became visible**."

In view of this hadith, it is important to note that what is narrated is the viewpoint of Anas Bin Malik who obviously did not observe the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) raising his hands when performing Witr prayer or invoking Allah against his enemies. Nevertheless, another hadith of Bukhari provides evidence for raising the hands during the witr prayer. The hadith in question that was narrated by Abu Uthmaan an-Nahdi reads as follows: "**Umar would perform the Qunoot (of Witr prayer) with us in the early morning prayer, and would raise his hands, so much that the side of his body under his arms would be seen**." Thus, as this hadith states, Umar (RA) is being observed and not the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), which provides justification for the statement of Anas Bin Malik who is

documented as saying that he did not observe the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) raising his hands when performing Witr prayer or invoking Allah against his enemies; i.e., Anas Bin Malik may have observed others raising their hands, but not the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.); and Allah knows best!

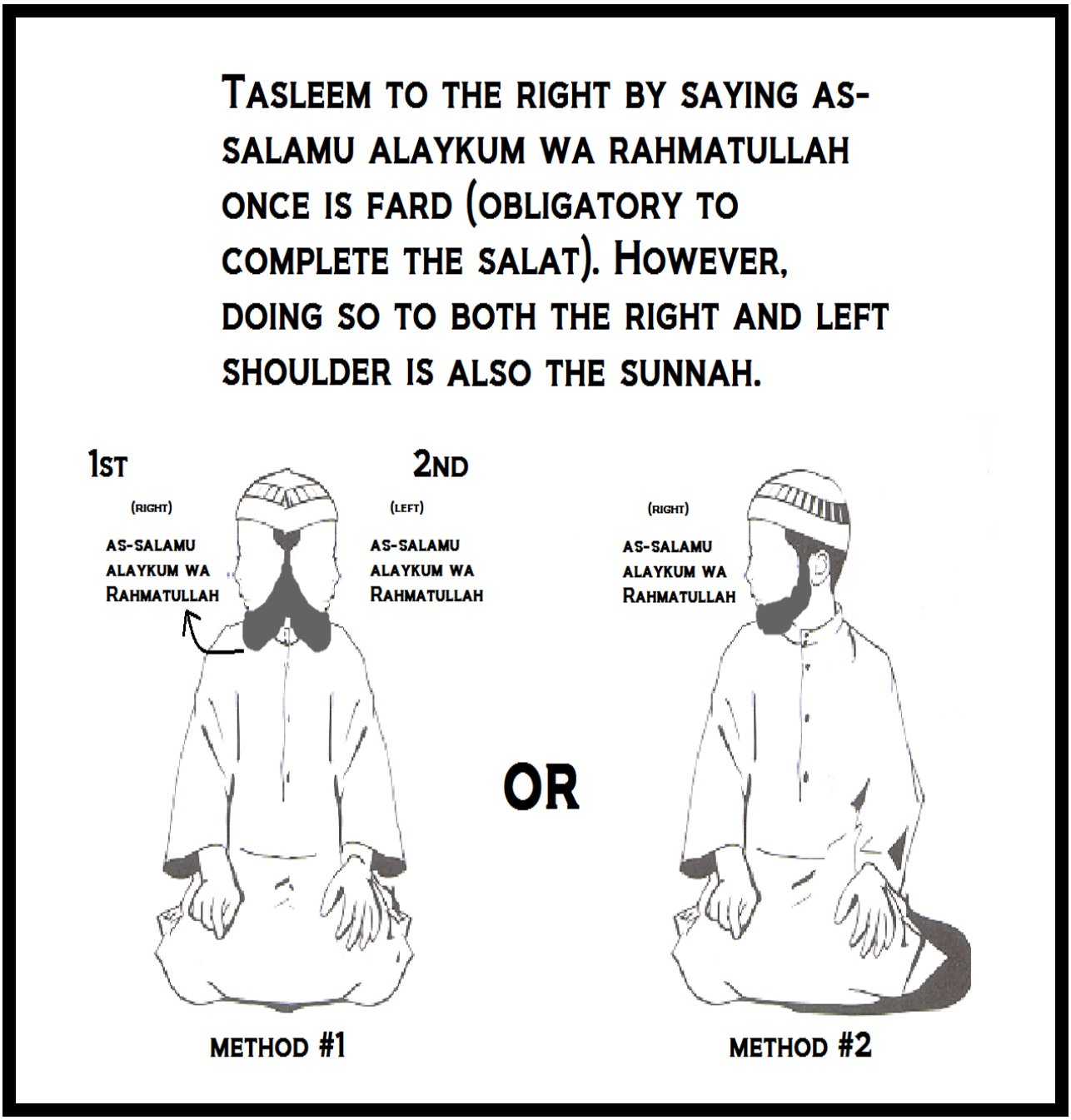
It is also worth mentioning that the raising of the hands during the Qunoot of Witr for a problem that was afflicting the Muslim community is also an established practice from the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.); because, he is recorded as making duah against the Mushrikeen (pagans) who killed seventy reciters of the Quran. The evidence for the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) practice of invoking Allah against the enemies of the Muslims is the hadith of Ahmad wherein Anas bin Malik reportedly said: "**I never ever saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) painfully agitated about anything as I saw him agitated over them. Indeed I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) in the early morning prayer (Witr) raising his hands and he supplicated against those who killed them.**" Therefore, since this depiction of the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) raising his hands is also narrated by Anas bin Malik, one can deduce that this incident occurred after his previous narration wherein he stated that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) never raised his hands for any invocation except for that of Istisqa' (invocation for rain).

- Duah is the weapon of the believers; and as such, when one invokes Allah during duah, it should be a personal act of worship wherein one asks for forgiveness, protection, etc., regarding personal matters; and not a mere ritual performed as a societal norm.

24) After completing the tashahud and before performing the tasleem invoke Allah seeking refuge from the punishment of death, the grave, the afflictions of Ad-dajjal, this life, debt, and matters of the religion.

The evidence for this instruction is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Aisha (RA) was reported to have said: **"Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) used to invoke Allah in the prayer saying 'Allahumma inni a'udhu bika min adhabil-qabri, wa a'udhu bika min fitnatil-masihi d-dajjal, wa a'udhu bika min fitnatil-mahya wa fitnatil-mamati. Allahumma inni a'udhu bika minal-ma thami wal-maghrami. (O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the punishment of the grave, and from the afflictions of Ad-dajjal, and from the afflictions of life and death. O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the sins and from being in debt).' Somebody said to him, 'Why do you so frequently seek refuge with Allah from being in debt?' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) replied, 'A person in debt tells lies whenever he speaks, and breaks promises whenever he makes (them).'"**

25) Tasleem (Taslim) - End the salat by saying: "As-salamu alaykum wa Rahmatullah" over the right shoulder either once, which is fard (compulsory), or say: "As-salamu alaykum wa Rahmatullah" over the left shoulder as well. This method is also regarded as the sunnah of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.).


TASLEEM TO THE RIGHT BY SAYING AS-SALAMU ALAYKUM WA RAHMATULLAH ONCE IS FARD (OBLIGATORY TO COMPLETE THE SALAT). HOWEVER, DOING SO TO BOTH THE RIGHT AND LEFT SHOULDER IS ALSO THE SUNNAH.
1ST
(RIGHT)
AS-SALAMU ALAYKUM WA RAHMATULLAH
2ND
(LEFT)
AS-SALAMU ALAYKUM WA RAHMATULLAH
OR
(RIGHT)
AS-SALAMU ALAYKUM WA RAHMATULLAH
METHOD #1
METHOD #2

The evidence for this practice is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Ali Ibn Abu Talib narrated that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: "**The key to prayer is purification; its beginning is takbir and its end is taslim**." Furthermore, evidence illustrating the manner in which the tasleem is to be performed is a hadith in the collection of Tirmidhi wherein Ibn Mas`ud reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to give the salutation to his right and left sides saying: Peace be upon you, and mercy of Allah twice, until the whiteness of his cheek was seen**." In view of this hadith, it is important to note that performing tasleem to the right and left and saying "As-Salamu 'Alaikum Warah matullah (Peace be upon you, and mercy of Allah)" is the most frequent practice of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and his companions. However, there is evidence which proves that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) actually performed tasleem only once, to the right side only. The evidence for this occasional practice is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Aisha (RA) is reported to have said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to say Taslim once while facing straight and leaning slightly to the right side**."

Methods of performing the tasleem:

1) **As-Salamu 'alaykum to the right slightly**

The evidence for the practice of saying "As-Salamu 'alaykum" slightly to the right is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Aisha

(RA) is reported to have said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to say Taslim once while facing straight and leaning slightly to the right side**."

2) **As-Salamu 'alaykum wa rah matullaah to the right, as-Salamu 'alaykum to the left**

The evidence for this practice is found in *The Abridgment of The Prophet's Prayer Described* by Shaykh Muhammad Nasiruddin al-Albani. The hadith in question collected by Ahmad with a saheeh sanad reads as follows: "**When he (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Peace and Allah's Mercy be on you to his right, he would sometimes shorten the greeting on his left to: Peace be on you**.'"

3) **As-Salamu 'alaykum wa rah matullaah to both sides**

The evidence for this practice is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Abdullah narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) prayed ..... and finished his prayers with Taslim (by turning his face to right and left saying: 'As-Salamu'Alaikum-Wa-rah-matullah").**'"

4) **As-Salamu 'alaykum wa rah matullaahi wa barakaatuh to the right, and as-Salamu 'alaykum wa rah matullaah to the left**

The evidence for this practice is found in *The Abridgment of The Prophet's Prayer Described* by Shaykh Muhammad Nasiruddin al-Albani. The hadith in question collected by Abu Dawud & Ibn

Khuzaimah (1/87/2) with a saheeh sanad reads as follows: "**Sometimes, he (P.B.U.H.) would add to the greeting on the right: '... and His blessings (be on you)**.'"

The methods of performing tasleem (taslim) in salat according to the four Madhabs:

1) **Malaki Madhab:** only says "as-salamu alaikum wa rah matullah" once when turning the head to the right.
2) **Shafi'i Madhab:** says "as-salamu alaikum wa rah matullah" to the right and left. Also, considers pronouncing the tasleem once as being sufficient. (Ash-Shafiee was reported to have said: "If you wish you can give one Tasleem, and if you wish you can give two Tasleems.")
3) **Hanbali Madhab:** It is obligatory to say "as-salamu alaikum wa rah matullah" twice (to the right and left)
4) **Hanafi Madhab:** says "as-salamu alaikum wa rah matullah" to the right and left, but "does not consider it obligatory;" only an established sunnah. Furthermore, the Hanafi Madhab also considers pronouncing the tasleem "once" as being sufficient.

To reiterate, when performing the tasleem, one should at least do so by facing straight and leaning slightly to the right with a single salam (As-Salamu 'alaykum) or to completely turn the face towards the right and left and say As-Salamu 'alaykum wa rah matullaah to both sides in a manner that will enable an onlooker to clearly see each cheek. (those on the right will see the right cheek and vise versa). Furthermore, there is no authentic evidence from the Quran or sunnah of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) to support any of the following actions:

- **Pausing between each tasleem and uttering something**
- **Nodding or bouncing the head before or during each tasleem**
- **Looking up to the qiblah direction before each tasleem**
- **Rolling one's head to each side while dipping the shoulders**
- **Beginning the tasleem by looking straight ahead and later turning the head near the end of the phrase**

Suplications after tasleem:

If one desires, they are permitted to make a personal duah after the tasleem. However, whether it is permissible to supplicate after the tasleem audibly or silently is a matter in which the scholars have not reached a consensus. The evidence

presented by those who support the opinion that supplications should be recited aloud, such as Al-Tabari, Ibn Hazm, and Shaykh al-Islam (Ibn Taymiyah), is a hadith collected by Imam Muslim wherein Abu Ma'bad, the freed slave of Ibn Abbas, narrated that Ibn Abbas allegedly said to him: "**People used to raise their voices in dhikr when they finished an obligatory prayer at the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Ibn ʻAbbas further said: 'I used to know when they had finished (the prayer) by that, when I heard it.**'" A similiar report is found in the collection of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abbas is reported to have said: "**I used to realize that the prayer had finished when I heard the sound of Takbeer.**" Furthermore, Imam Nawawi allegedly wrote is his explanation of Sahih Muslim that the Hadith of Ibn Abbas is an evidence for those scholars who recommend that the takbeer and the words of remembrance should be in a loud voice when uttered after the obligatory prayers; i.e., saying Allahu-Akbar and the dhikr of Subhana-Allah (Glory be to Allah), Al-hamdulillah (Praise be to Allah), and Allahu-Akbar (Allah is the greatest). However, other scholars such as Imam Shafi'i and the vast majority are of the opinion that supplicating the words of remembrance aloud after the tasleem is undesirable; maintaining that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) merely raised his voice to teach the characteristic of the dhikr, and did not continue doing so as an established practice.

The rationale behind not reciting supplication aloud is that by doing so as an established practice actually conflicts with the detailed directive from Surah Al-A'raf (7:205) of the Quran which reads: **"And do thou (O reader!) Bring thy Lord to remembrance in thy (very) soul, with humility and in reverence, without loudness in words, in the mornings and evenings; and be not thou of those who are not heedful."** Furthermore, Imam Shafi'i is also recorded as saying: "My view is that the Imam and the person praying behind him should remember Allah after they have finish praying, but they should recite dhikr in a low voice unless he is an Imam who is to be learned from, in which case he should recite in a loud voice until he thinks that it has been learned from him, then he should recite quietly; because, Allah says in Surah Al-Isra (17:110) of the Quran: **'Say: 'Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Neither speak thy Prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between;'** meaning, supplication. In addition, **"Neither speak thy Prayer aloud"** means do not raise your voice and **"Nor speak it in a low tone"** means, so low that you cannot hear yourself; and Allah knows best." With this being said, it is also important to note that according to fatwa (83390) from Islamweb.net, the act of supplicating aloud is only narrated from Ibn Abbas.

Nevertheless, according to fatwa (87768) from Islamqa.com, "As for the argument that reciting out loud is disapproved because of the verse **"And do thou (O reader!) Bring thy Lord to remembrance in thy (very) soul, with humility and in reverence, without loudness in words, in the mornings and evenings; and be not thou of those who are not heedful"** (Al-A'raf 7:205),' we say: 'The one who was enjoined to remember his Lord within himself, humbly and with fear, was the same one who used to recite dhikr out loud following obligatory prayers. Does the one who says this know better what Allah meant than His Messenger (P.B.U.H.) did? Or does he believe that the Messenger (P.B.U.H.) knew what was meant but went against it? Moreover, the verse speaks of dhikr at the beginning and end of the day ('in the mornings and in the afternoons'), not the dhikr that is prescribed following prayers. In his Tafseer, Ibn Katheer interpreted reciting out loud as meaning too loud or extremely loud. Furthermore, as for the argument that reciting out loud is disapproved because of the words of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.): 'O people, take it easy,' the one who said 'O people, take it easy' is the same one who used to recite dhikr out loud following the prescribed prayers. There is a place for this and a place for that, and truly following means following every text when appropriate. Moreover, the context of the phrase 'take it easy' indicates that they used to raise their voices in a manner that

caused them hardship, hence he said 'take it easy,' i.e., be kind to yourselves and do not exhaust yourselves; because, there should be no hardship or undue effort in reciting dhikr out loud."

26) Tasbih/tasbeeh (dhikr to Allah). It is encouraged that one should perform dhikr to Allah after completing each of the five obligatory salat by counting the finger joints of the right hand (left is also permissible) or by using misbaha (prayer beads) to say subhan-Allah (glory be to Allah) 33 times, Al-hamdu-lillah (praise be to Allah) 33 times, and Allahu-Akbar (Allah is the greatest) 33 times; and complete the process (the 100th dhikr) by saying: "La ilaha illallahu, wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamdu, wa Huwa `ala kulli shai'in Qadir." This translates into English as, "There is no true god except Allah. He is One and He has no partner with Him. His is the sovereignty and His is the praise, and He is Omnipotent."

The evidence for this directive is the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abu Hurayrah reportedly said: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Whoever glorifies Allah (says Subhaan Allah) thirty-three times immediately after each prayer, and praises Allah (says Al-hamdu Lillaah) thirty-three times, and magnifies Allah (says Allahu akbar) thirty-three times, this makes ninety-**

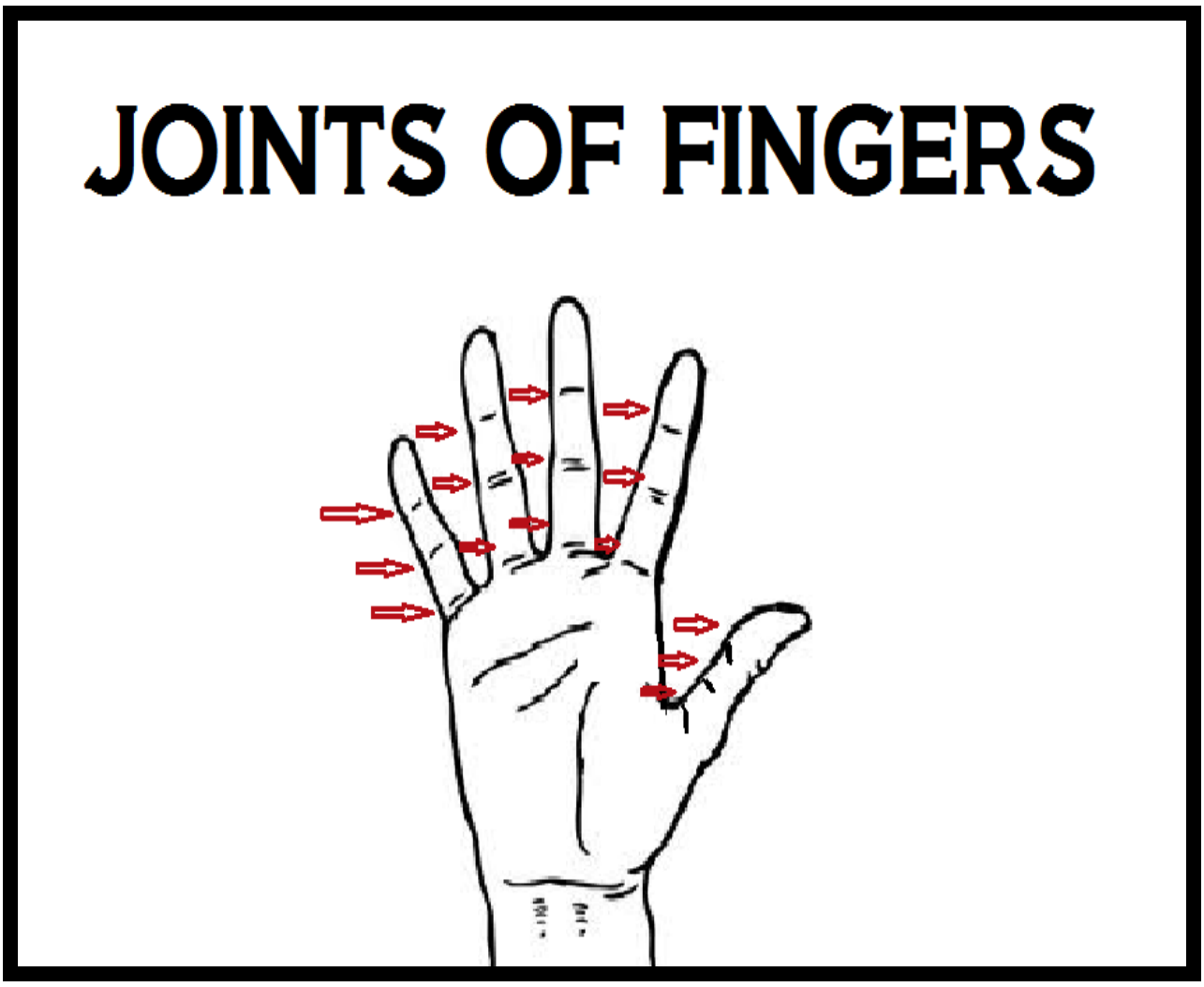
nine, then to complete one hundred says Laa ilaaha ill-Allah wahdahu laa shareeka lahu, lahu'l-mulk wa lahu'l-hamd wa huwa 'ala kulli shay'in qadeer (There is no god except Allaah Alone, with no partner, His is the power and His is the praise, and He is Able to do all things) – his sins will be forgiven even if they are like the foam of the sea.'" Additional evidence for this practice is found in another hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Ka'b bin 'Ujrah (RA) reportedly said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said, 'There are some words, the reciters of which will never be disappointed. These are: Tasbih [saying 'Subhan-Allah' (Allah is free from imperfection)], thirty-three times, Tahmid [saying 'Al-hamdu lillah' (praise be to Allah)] thirty-three times, and Takbir [saying 'Allahu Akbar' (Allah is The Greatest)] thirty-four times; and these should be recited after the conclusion of every prescribed prayer**.'" Furthermore, there is an alternate method for performing dhikr wherein one merely says Subhaan Allah ten times immediately after each prayer, Al-hamdu Lillaah ten times, and Allahu akbar ten times. The evidence for this practice is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Abd-Allaah ibn Amr (RA) narrated: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.)said: 'There are two qualities, no Muslim man acquires them but he will enter Paradise, and they are simple and easy. He should glorify Allah (say Subhaan Allah) ten times immediately after each prayer, and praise Him (say Al-hamdu**

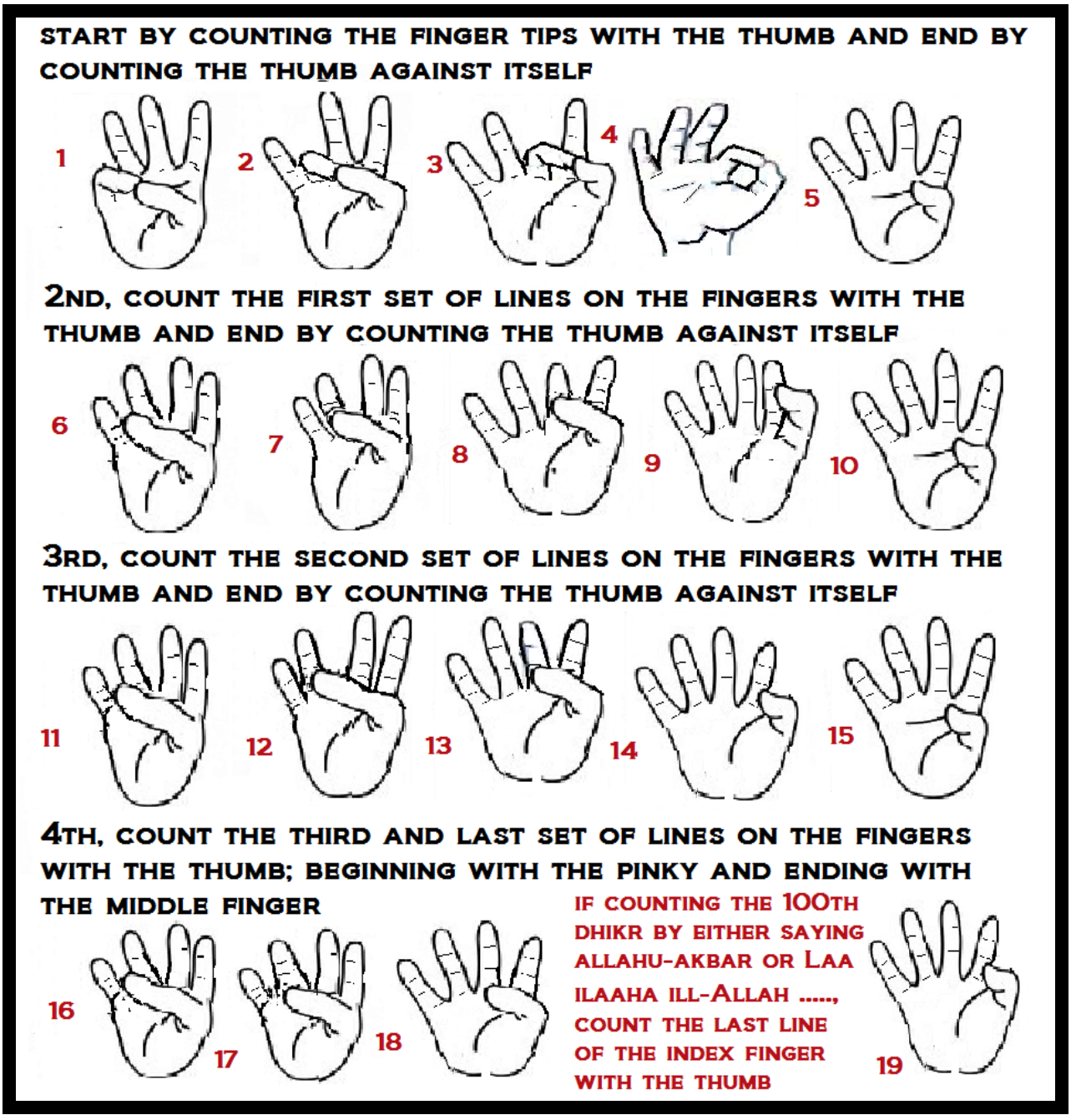
Lillaah) ten times, and magnify Him (say Allahu akbar) ten times.' I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.)counting this on his fingers. He said: 'That makes one hundred and fifty on the tongue, and one thousand five hundred (hasanaat) in the scales.' [Translator's note: each of three phrases repeated ten times makes thirty; multiplied by the number of daily prayers, which is five, makes one hundred and fifty. Each of these good deeds of the tongue will be rewarded with ten hasanaat which will be added to the total of good deeds to be weighed in the balance or scales on the Day of Judgment]...."

Performing dhikr either on the fingers or through the use of other objects:

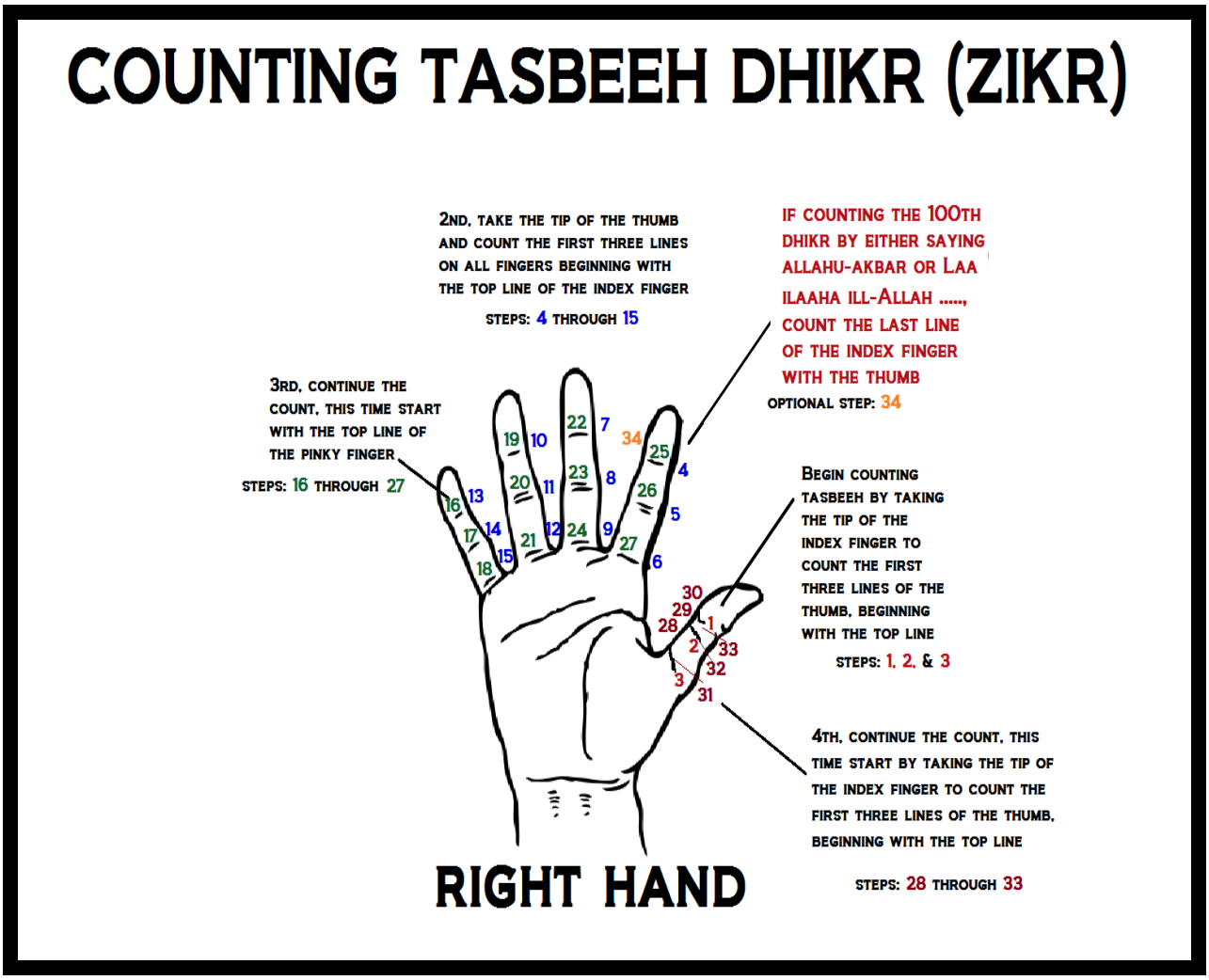
The evidence for performing dhikr with the fingers of the right hand is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Ubayd-Allaah ibn 'Umar ibn Maysarah and Muhammad ibn Qudaamah, among others, were reported to have said that Aththaam told them from al-A'mash from Ataa' ibn al-Saa'ib from his father from Abd-Allaah ibn Amr who said: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) counting the tasbeeh.' Ibn Qudaamah said: 'With his right hand**.'" Also, another hadith collected by Abu Dawud that was narrated by Abdullah Bin Amr Bin al-'Aas reports as follows: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) keep count of tasbeeh by closing**

the fingers." What is more, the evidence pertaining to what should be done in the process of closing the fingers in dhikr, namely closing the fingers together and counting the joints is a hadith in the collection of Tirmidhi that was narrated by Yaseera who was reported to have said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.)told women: 'Engage in tasebeeh, tahleel and taqdees (i.e. engage in various forms of Zikr) and keep count with the joints of the fingers. on the Day of Qiyaamah, these fingers will be questioned and they will be made to speak**."



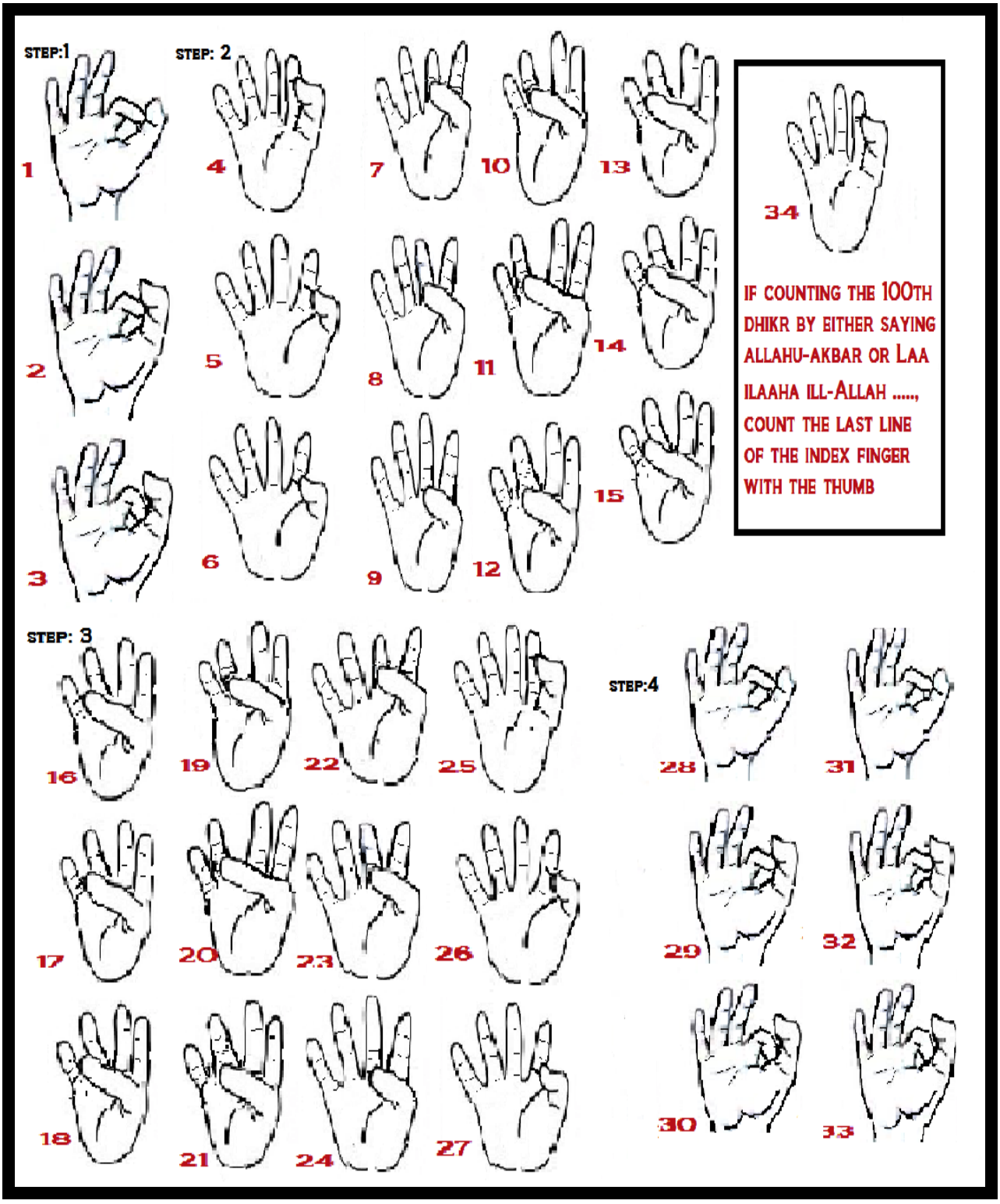

START BY COUNTING THE FINGER TIPS WITH THE THUMB AND END BY COUNTING THE THUMB AGAINST ITSELF
1
2
3
4
5
2ND, COUNT THE FIRST SET OF LINES ON THE FINGERS WITH THE THUMB AND END BY COUNTING THE THUMB AGAINST ITSELF
6
7
8
9
10
3RD, COUNT THE SECOND SET OF LINES ON THE FINGERS WITH THE THUMB AND END BY COUNTING THE THUMB AGAINST ITSELF
11
12
13
14
15
4TH, COUNT THE THIRD AND LAST SET OF LINES ON THE FINGERS WITH THE THUMB; BEGINNING WITH THE PINKY AND ENDING WITH THE MIDDLE FINGER
16
17
18
IF COUNTING THE 100TH DHIKR BY EITHER SAYING ALLAHU-AKBAR OR LAA ILAAHA ILL-ALLAH ....., COUNT THE LAST LINE OF THE INDEX FINGER WITH THE THUMB
19

- In the above diagram, begin the counting by using the tip of the thumb to count the finger tips and lines of the joints; starting with the tip of the thumb against the tip of the pinky finger. (**It is strongly encouraged to perform the act of worship on the right hand**)


COUNTING TASBEEH DHIKR (ZIKR)
2ND, TAKE THE TIP OF THE THUMB AND COUNT THE FIRST THREE LINES ON ALL FINGERS BEGINNING WITH THE TOP LINE OF THE INDEX FINGER
STEPS: 4 THROUGH 15
IF COUNTING THE 100TH DHIKR BY EITHER SAYING ALLAHU-AKBAR OR LAA ILAAHA ILL-ALLAH ....., COUNT THE LAST LINE OF THE INDEX FINGER WITH THE THUMB
OPTIONAL STEP: 34
3RD, CONTINUE THE COUNT, THIS TIME START WITH THE TOP LINE OF THE PINKY FINGER
STEPS: 16 THROUGH 27
BEGIN COUNTING TASBEEH BY TAKING THE TIP OF THE INDEX FINGER TO COUNT THE FIRST THREE LINES OF THE THUMB, BEGINNING WITH THE TOP LINE
STEPS: 1, 2, & 3
4TH, CONTINUE THE COUNT, THIS TIME START BY TAKING THE TIP OF THE INDEX FINGER TO COUNT THE FIRST THREE LINES OF THE THUMB, BEGINNING WITH THE TOP LINE
STEPS: 28 THROUGH 33
RIGHT HAND

- Begin counting tasbeeh by using the tip of the index finger to count the first three lines of the thumb, beginning with the top line. 2nd, take the tip of the thumb and count the first three lines on all fingers beginning with the top line of the index finger. 3rd, continue the count, this time start with the top line of the pinky finger and continue until finished counting the index finger. 4th, continue the count, this time start by taking the tip of the index finger to count the first three lines of the

thumb, beginning with the top line (the lines of the thumb is counted a total of 9 times).



- According to Shaykh Assim Al-Hakeem: "There is no explicit statement with regard to the exact manner in which the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) performed dhikr with his right hand; i.e., the manner of counting on the finger joints, other than the number of times for saying each. All what is known is that one should make dhikr on the right hand with their fingers, as this is the Sunnah."

The evidence for using objects other than the fingers of the right hand to perform dhikr is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqaas narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) noticed some date-stones or pebbles placed in front of one of his wives with which she was making Tasbeeh....**"

Furthermore, all four Madhabs even permit the use of dhikr beads; and scholars such as Imam al-Nawawi, Imam Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, and Imam Badr al-Din al-`Ayni, explicitly permitted the use of prayer beads.

Likewise, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (al-Liqa' al-Maftooh, 3/30) was asked whether using the masbahah for tasbeeh is bid'ah, and his reply was: "It is better not to do tasbeeh with the masbahah, but it is not bid'ah, because there is a basis for it, which is the fact that some of the Sahaabah did tasbeeh with pebbles; but the Messenger (P.B.U.H.) taught that tasbeeh with the fingers is better, as he said, 'Count with the

fingertips, for they will be made to speak.' Doing tasbeeh with the masbahah is not haram or bid'ah, but it is better not to do it, because the one who does tasbeeh with the masbahah has shunned something better. Using the masbahah may also be contaminated with some element of showing off; because, we see some people carrying masbahahs that contain a thousand beads, as if they are telling people, 'Look at me, I do a thousand tasbeehs!' Secondly, those who use the masbahah for tasbeeh are usually absent-minded and not focused, so you see them doing tasbeeh with the beads, but their gaze is wandering all over the place, which indicates that they are not really concentrating. It is better to do tasbeeh with one's fingers, preferably using the right hand rather than the left, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to count his tasbeeh on his right hand. If a person counts his tasbeeh using both hands, there is nothing wrong with that, but it is better to use the right hand only." Similarly, Shaykh Jalaal-ud-deen As-Suyootee a famous Shaafi'i Mujtahid Imam, elaborated on the issue in his book Al Haawi lil Fataawee, wherein he was reported to have said: "Counting the times one says Subhaan Allah on one's fingers is superior to doing so on dhikr beads because of the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abdullah Ibn Amr reportedly said, "**I saw Allah's messenger (P.B.U.H.) counting the tasbeeh on the right [hand]**"); though it has been said that if the person

saying it (dhikr) is safe from mistakes, then his fingers are better; however, if not, then saying it on dhikr beads is more suitable." Lastly, Shaykh As-Suyootee is also reported to have said: "Some of the most renowned Muslims have used rosaries, those from whom the Religion is taken, and whom are relied upon, such as Abu Hurayrah who had a string with two thousand knots in it, and he did not used to sleep except after saying Subhaan Allah on it twelve thousand times."

In view of the above mentioned information, it is important to note that Abu Khaliyl Ja'ad Ibn Sylvester at Maktabatul Uthaymeen in *A Reply To The Claims That Imam As-Suyootee Supported The Practice of Subhah* was reported to have said: "The great scholar, As-Suyootee (RA), noted that due to the hadith of Ibn Amr noted above, it is better to count the tasbeeh on one's fingers. Furthermore, As-Suyootee noted that 'It has been said (Qeelaa), that this is better if the person is safe from losing count, whereas if he is not safe from that, then the beads are more suitable. Then he gave the example of Abu Hurayrah. We ask Allah to reward Imam As-Suyootee for mentioning what has been said, and we do this out of sincerity. As a note however, it should be noted that the report alluded to is not one that has been graded as Sahih or Hasan, rather its grade is weak. It is transmitted by way of Abdul Waahid Ibn Moosaa from Mu'aym Ibn

Muharrar Ibn Abee Hurayrah from his grandfather [Abu Hurayrah], '**That he had a string with one thousand knots on it and he would not sleep until he had done his Tasbeeh on it.**' There is another narration whose meaning he has combined into this statement about Abu Hurayrah, that is reported via Ikrimah from Abu Hurayrah that he said, 'Astaghfrullaah' twelve thousand times, but this report is disconnected after Ikrimah, for he is not known by the Hadith Scholars to have actually heard from Abu Hurayrah (See Al Inaabah by Ibn Hajar). Nevertheless, it does not mention dhikr beads at all (rather another object other than the fingers of the right hand). So it has nothing to do with this discussion either way. As for the narration about the string with Abu Hurayrah, it is weak because its chain contains Nu'aym Ibn Muharrar, whose condition among hadith narrators is that of an unknown. It is for this reason that what Suyootee labeled as 'better' - is indeed better - May Allah reward him - rather there is no authentic evidence to prove that it was commanded, and otherwise it would contradict the command, since it has not been authentically reported that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) nor any of his companions used dhikr beads. Furthermore, some of the companions and their followers were reported to have rejected alternatives to the fingers in this regard." Allah knows best!

In summary, the point of views presented from the above mentioned evidences proves that the consensus among the scholars is that performing dhikr on the fingers of the right hand is the established practice of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Nevertheless, one is permitted to use dhikr beads if needed since there is evidence proving that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) did not "prohibit" the use of the other items used by the companions to perform this act of worship; such as those who used date stones and pebbles. The evidence that the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) silence; i.e., not prohibiting the use of other than the fingers of the right hand to perform dhikr is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Salman al-Farsi reportedly said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) was asked about animal fat, cheese, and fur, he replied, 'The halal is that which Allah has made lawful in His Book and the haram is that which He has forbidden, and that concerning which He is silent, He has permitted as a favor to you.'**"

Special note: If one is ill or disabled, they are permitted to perform salatul Istikharah while either sitting or lying down. The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Imran ibn Husain reportedly said: "**I was suffering from hemorrhoids (piles), so I asked the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) and he said: Pray standing; if you are not able, then**

sitting down; if you are not able to do so, then pray lying down." It is also worth mentioning that another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Imran ibn Husain also reports: "**I asked the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) about the prayer of a man while sitting, so he said: 'He who prays standing, that is better; he who prays sitting, his reward is half that of the former (normal salat). He who prays lying down (and in another narration: reclining), has half the reward of the one who sits**."

- Khattaabi said, "The meaning of 'Imran's hadith is intended for a sick person who is able to undergo hardship and stand with difficulty. Hence the reward of praying sitting has been made half of the reward of praying standing; encouraging him to pray standing while allowing him to sit." Ibn Hajr said in Fath al-Baari (2/468): "This deduction is valid."